ABSTRACT

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A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON PREKINDERGARTEN TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF THE HIGH/SCOPE CURRICULUM AND ITS IMPACT ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF PREKINDERGARTEN STUDENTS IN A GEORGIA PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Advisor: Dr. Darrell Groves

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The purpose of this study was to determine prekindergarten teacher perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students in a Georgia Public School System.

The study examined the perceptions of pre-kindergarten teacher's who had received High/Scope curriculum training and teach using the High/Scope curriculum in their prekindergarten classrooms. The study was designed to assess the extent to which these educators' perceptions correlated and differed on the specific impact the High/Scope curriculum has on preparing pre-kindergarten students with kindergarten readiness skills.

The findings, which were based on document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and teacher classroom observations, showed that there is a relationship

between teacher perceptions of High/Scope, teacher training in High/Scope, teacher interpretation of High/Scope, and teacher implementation of the High/Scope curriculum.

The conclusions drawn from the findings suggest that pre-kindergarten teachers' perceptions of High/Scope are primarily based on their High/Scope training experience, interpretation of High/Scope, and academic standards of students. Moreover, this research informed school administrators, project directors, assistant superintendents, and superintendents of the impact of using prekindergarten teachers' perceptions as criteria in their curriculum adoption process to improve student academic performance in prekindergarten.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Today, numerous carefully designed prekindergarten curriculums have great potential for providing high-quality education. However, many of these approaches do not totally emphasize all aspects of early childhood education. They either lack developmental appropriateness or are deficient in helping prekindergarten children acquire knowledge and skills needed to build a strong foundation for continued academic success in school.

To improve student performance in the primary years and beyond, the High/Scope curriculum was designed to meet the needs of children developmentally. High/Scope is an educational model originally developed and disseminated in 1962 by the staff of the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, under the leadership of David P. Weikart (Hohmann & Weikart, 1995).

Background of the Study

High/Scope Curriculum

The fundamental premise of the High/Scope approach, based on the child development ideas of Swiss psychologist, Jean Piaget, is that children are active learners who learn best from activities that they plan and carry out themselves (Hohmann & Weikart, 1995). Through self-initiated active learning experiences, children learn concepts, form ideas, and create their own symbols and abstractions. Teachers arrange

interest areas in the classroom and maintain a daily routine that permits children to plan and carry out their own activities.

High/Scope teachers are guided by a group of key experiences that children need to have as part of their intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development (Schweinhart, 1988). The central principles of the High/Scope preschool curriculum include: active learning, positive adult-child interactions, a child-friendly environment, a consistent daily routine, and a daily child assessment.

Active learning is the principle element of the High/Scope educational approach. It is fundamental to the full development of human potential and is most effective in settings that provide developmentally appropriate learning opportunities (Hohmann, Banet, & Weikart, 1979). Adults ensure the presence of five essential elements in the active learning setting: materials, manipulation, choice, language from children, and support from adults.

Active learning depends on positive adult interaction. Adults interact with children in ways that empower children to take control of their own learning. Throughout the day, guided by an understanding of how prekindergarten children think and reason, adults practice positive interaction strategies, including: sharing control with children, focusing on children's strength, forming authentic relationships with children, supporting children's play, and adopting a problem-solving approach to social conflict (Hohmann & Weikart, 1995).

In a High/Scope early childhood setting, adults create a child-centered environment. The classroom's furniture and equipment are arranged in several clearly

defined interest areas that attract children and enable them to find, use, and return the materials they need in order to explore and invent. Open-ended materials are plentiful and are stored in labeled and accessible containers and places. The environment becomes a familiar place where children feel ownership and confident of their ability to carry out their intentions (Brickman & Taylor, 1991).

The High/Scope daily routine follows a similar schedule of events, providing consistency for both children and adults. These active learning experiences include the plan-do-review sequence, small group time, large group time, outside time, transition time, eating and resting times. The plan-do-review process is at the core of the High/Scope routine and gives children the opportunity to pursue their own interest, make plans, follow through on them, and reflect on their experiences with peers and adults (Schweinhart, 1988).

In the High/Scope curriculum, assessment includes a range of task adult practitioners undertake to ensure that observing children, interacting with children, and planning for children receive full adult energy and attention (Hohmann & Weikart, 1995). Teachers gather accurate information about children by observing and interacting with them and taking daily anecdotal notes based on what they see and hear. Teachers analyze the observation of children in terms of High/Scopes' key experiences.

The High/Scope key experiences are a series of statements describing the social, cognitive, and physical development of pre-school-age children. Each statement highlights an experience that is essential for the fundamental abilities that emerge during

the preschool years. The key experiences provide a detailed picture of the typical actions of young children and the kinds of knowledge they are involved in constructing (Hohmann, 1991).

High/Scope teachers are guided by a group of fifty eight key experiences. High/Scopes' 58 key experiences are divided into ten categories: creative representation, language and literacy, initiative and social relations, movement, music, classification, seriation, number sense, space, and time. These experiences are the central feature for the teacher. They are a way of helping the teacher support and extend the child's self-designed activity so that developmentally appropriate experiences and opportunities for growth are constantly available (Brickman & Taylor, 1991).

Contrasting Curriculum Approaches

The primary alternative to child-initiated activity is teacher-directed instruction, which is virtually synonymous with formal schooling in the minds of many people. In teacher-directed instruction, the teacher transmits spoken and written information to children and through questioning, paperwork, and test, checks to make sure the information has been received. Despite its success in raising student achievement levels, direct-instruction is heavily criticized for being too rigid; concentrating too heavily on the basics (Schweinhart, 1988).

Direct-instruction is a highly structured instructional approach designed to accelerate the learning of students. Curriculum materials and instructional sequences attempt to move students to mastery at the fastest possible pace, seeking to make teacher-directed instruction more efficient by scripting the teacher's spoken words and the child's

likely responses (Schweinhart, 1988). The teacher identifies the child's entry-level skills and prepares instruction along pre-determined lines. Some argue that lectures, teacher-centered discussions, and paperwork- all of which are standard practices in the nation's public schools, are largely inappropriate when young children are involved.

Marva Collins, a widely known educator who espouses a philosophy of high-expectations and "tough-love" in educating children, is an advocate for teacher-directed instruction. Her success in getting children to read and perform mathematical equations two grades above grade level seemingly implies that others can do the same if educated in a similar manner. However, according to Schweinhart (1988), "the danger of accepting this 'any one can do it' philosophy about academic achievement is that while some children might succeed beyond expectations, others, if pushed beyond their current development stage, might experience only failure and frustration"(p. 49).

The Madeline Hunter Approach is strongly linked to high quality early childhood education as evidenced by her emphasis on motivation and making learning attractive to children, emphasizing positive reinforcement, while blending guided practice with independent practice. Madeline Hunter's effort to translate instructional theory into practice has gained great popularity among educators (Hunter, 1982). However, Hunter's approach ties each learning activity to a specific behavioral objective that is identified beforehand by the teacher. In contrast to High/Scope's approach, the Hunter Approach encourages children to initiate their own learning activities, with the teachers identifying the learning patterns to be facilitated within these activities (Schweinhart, 1988).

The *High Reach* curriculum is a theme-based early childhood program that is geared toward kindergarten readiness. It is based on the philosophy that children learn best through hands-on activities that address the needs of the whole child. However, the High Reach learning curriculum reflects the belief that children need a balance of child-initiated and teacher-facilitated activities each day. The High Reach curriculum uses themes to introduce information as children explore and manipulate real objects and events (Sinclair, 2001).

The *Creative* curriculum for preschool is a comprehensive early childhood curriculum created to improve cognitive and social/emotional outcomes in young children. This curriculum balances both teacher-directed and child-initiated learning as well, with an emphasis on responding to children's learning styles and building on their strengths and interests. The philosophy behind the curriculum is that young children learn best by doing. In the early years, children are encouraged to explore the world around them by using all their senses. In using real materials such as blocks, children learn about sizes, shapes, and colors. The goal of the curriculum is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners focusing on their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical behavior. (Colker, Dodge, & Trister, 2002).

The Montessori Method formulated by Maria Montessori in the early 1900s is a child-centered approach that accepts the special characteristics of the developing child and places great faith in children's potential (Montessori, 1965). Very similar to the High/Scope curriculum, learning activities in Montessori programs are said to be child-initiated and developmentally appropriate. However, the materials to some extent control

the child's learning by self-teaching and self-correcting. Montessori cylinder blocks for example, fit together in only one way. Teachers can only encourage discovery and understanding within limits. There is also great variation in teacher backgrounds, training and interpretation of curriculum principles, coupled with the lack of longitudinal research on the effects of Montessori programs (Schweinhart, 1988).

High/Scope Teacher Training

Four-Week Training

High/Scope offers extensive training to provide teachers with comprehensive coverage of the five major topics in the High/Scope Wheel of Learning: Active Learning, Adult-Child Interaction, Learning Environment, Daily Routine, and Assessment. The training program offers active participation and study for participants to engage them in the learning process and to help them become more effective instructors (High/Scope, 2005).

A four-week Preschool Curriculum Course is designed to prepare teachers and caregivers with the essentials to implement the High/Scope educational approach in their early childhood programs. Using carefully selected training materials, participants focus on child development, developmentally appropriate practice, and their own educational development (High/Scope, 2005).

This preschool curriculum course is composed of 20 six-hour days of instruction distributed over 4 five-day weeks. Training sessions are usually conducted in a single central location for groups of 20–40 participants. The training weeks are separated by 3 to 4 weeks to enable the teachers to practice what they have learned (High/Scope, 2005).

Participants are actively involved in group work during the training weeks. At the beginning of each training week, the consultant reviews implementation issues and concerns that teachers have faced during the intervening weeks and then presents new material. The consultant and teachers then develop strategies for enhancing implementation at the site (High/Scope, 2005).

To actively study the material covered, participants complete reading and reflective writing assignments during the training sessions and in the weeks between sessions. These assignments help them to learn the central components of the curriculum, as presented in the written and audiovisual materials, and to practice curriculum implementation through activities they complete in their own classrooms (High/Scope, 2005).

Two-Week Training

The High/Scope Education Research Foundation offers a two week comprehensive training course for lead teachers in the state of Georgia, through Bright from the Start. The training program offers active participation and study for participants and provides teachers with comprehensive coverage of the five major topics in the High/Scope Wheel of Learning: Active Learning, Adult-Child Interaction, Learning Environment, Daily Routine, and Assessment. (Georgia Department of Education, 2005).

The training is offered in two, five-day sessions for a total of ten days, providing opportunities for participants to practice what they are learning and bring implementation questions to the next scheduled workshop. Each day of training provides in-depth information in an interactive, participatory setting. The topics covered are essential to

promoting staff development and providing sound educational experiences for young children. (Georgia Department of Education, 2005).

Statement of the Problem

Curriculum models, similar to the High/Scope approach, focus on child-initiated activity that acknowledges the developmental limits of young children. However, at one extreme of education, are those who virtually deny any developmental limits of young children, insisting that children can learn anything, including reading, writing, and arithmetic (Schweinhart, 1988). Simultaneously, at the other extreme, are educational thinkers who overlook the impact that early childhood education has on the academic performance of students, believing that the developmental limits of young children exclude meaningful learning experiences (Schweinhart, 1988).

Purpose of the Study

The primary focus of this research was to determine what impact the High/Scope Curriculum has on the academic performance of prekindergarten students based on the perceptions of prekindergarten teachers. With the No Child Left Behind Act governing school policy, practices, and procedures, concern about the achievement of America's youth has reached a new level. Greater evidence of student learning and better performance on state-wide assessments is critical. It is clear in this increasingly technological and global society that student achievement will have a major impact on students' career aspirations, their role in society, and even their sense of personal fulfillment (Malcom, 1999). This high level of concern has resulted in a growing

appreciation for the impact that early learning and prekindergarten curriculums could have on the life course of young children.

Research Questions

In order to determine prekindergarten teacher perceptions of the High/Scope Curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students, this study included the following research questions:

1. How do teachers believe their perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum impact the academic performance of prekindergarten students?
2. How does teacher training in High/Scope impact the academic performance of prekindergarten students?
3. How does teacher interpretation of the High/Scope approach impact the academic performance of prekindergarten students?
4. How does the implementation of the High/Scope curriculum impact the academic performance of prekindergarten students?
5. How do teacher academic standards of students impact the academic performance of prekindergarten students?

Significance of the Study

Traditionally, prekindergarten programs have received minimal consideration. This situation is changing as early learning is recognized as critical to school success. Carefully designed prekindergarten curriculums promoting developmentally appropriate practices are being questioned.

The most convincing way to determine if developmentally appropriate approaches like the High/Scope curriculum are most effective, in helping prekindergarten students acquire the knowledge and skills needed to build a strong foundation for continued academic success in school, was to have High/Scope trained prekindergarten teachers provide insight of their perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students.

Summary

The findings from this research will provide prekindergarten teachers, project directors, school administrators, and curriculum specialists with a qualitative analysis of the perceptions prekindergarten teachers have about the High/Scope curriculum. These findings will also provide new insight into the criteria necessary to evaluate the impact of the High/Scope curriculum. It will provide information regarding how teacher's academic standards of students and their perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum impacts the academic performance of prekindergarten students, as well as, determine the effectiveness of how teachers were trained to interpret and implement the High/Scope curriculum.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RESEARCH LITERATURE

The intent of this chapter is to review educational literature and research that is related to prekindergarten academic achievement. This chapter provides an overview of longitudinal research and comparison studies designed to measure the academic performance of prekindergarten students with specific emphasis on research conducted about the High/Scope curriculum. This literature review also includes research relating to teacher beliefs, practices, and training.

The literature was reviewed under the following headings: Benefits of Prekindergarten, Academic Achievement, High/Scope Comparison Studies, and Teacher Training and Perceptions.

Benefits of Prekindergarten

According to Campbell, Miller-Johnson, Sparling, and Pungello (2001), prekindergarten encompasses the full range of programs used by families to educate and nurture their 3- and 4-year old children, including school-based prekindergartens, community-based child care centers, Head Start, and home-based family child care. Across this variety of settings, PK assumes the provision of high-quality care in which children are safe, feel secure, and thrive in an environment that supports their physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development.

Magnuson, Meyers, Ruhm, and Waldfogel (2005) suggest preschool for 3- and 4-year olds is an effective investment for helping children succeed in the short term. Based on data from the *Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten (ECLS-K) Class of 1998-99*, children who attended preschool (the specific program type was not disaggregated) performed significantly better in both math and reading in the fall of their kindergarten year compared to children cared for only by their parents before kindergarten. In fact, children who attended preschool increased on average from the 50th to the 54th percentile in reading achievement. The effects on math skills were of a similar size.

Gorey (2001) tested the hypotheses that young children develop cognitive ability in diverse settings and that quality programs produce larger effects. In a meta-analysis, a sample of 35 original studies was examined from fourteen states, one Canadian province, and Israel, all of which explored at-risk factors for school failure. Studies focused on typically developing children below age five. Criteria of studies were: used quasi-experimental comparison or randomized experimental control group; assessed pretest equivalence among the sample; and detailed statistical findings. Results showed strong support that early childhood education is highly effective as preventive intervention for cognitive and behavioral development of preschoolers. Also, correlations were significant between intensity of the intervention and positive effect on children with effects maintained into adulthood.

Ewen, Mezey, and Matthews (2005) suggest that it is often difficult to define specifically and substantively the programs and services that use Title I funds. The lack

of such data has contributed to an unwillingness to increase Title I funding in percentage terms over the last four fiscal years. Based on solid research that shows the cost effectiveness of early education, expanding children's access to high quality PK and aligning those experiences with quality K-3 programs would be legitimate and important uses in which districts could invest new Title I funds.

Academic Achievement

Graue (1990) conducted an ethnographic study to understand the meaning of school readiness within the context of social constructs. Parents and teachers from three schools in a Rocky Mountain plains district were interviewed about their ideas and practices. School documents were reviewed; weekly classroom observations conducted, and field notes taken at each visit. Graue discovered that each school community had distinct and relative interpretations of what readiness meant. The study provided recommendations to refocus attention of parents, schools, and communities along with policy makers to support and to implement appropriate, comprehensive, and meaningful school readiness activities to prepare each child for kindergarten.

Gullo and Burton (1992) gave attention to controversy regarding academic readiness for young children based on effects of a child's age, preschool experience, and sex. They tested the hypothesis that early school and academic readiness predicted a child's later school success and that chronological age, sex, biological, and experiential factors played a significant role. Preschoolers, ages 3 – 5 years from a large urban school were selected by lottery. Participants included children from low-income households, Head Start classrooms, those with special needs, and many of African-American and

Hispanic background. Norm-referenced instruments measured each child's academic achievement.

Researchers discovered sex was not a significant predictor of academic readiness whereas previous preschool experience made a significant difference. Despite limitations, data revealed preschool experiences were beneficial for children identified as either at-risk or not at-risk. The study held policy implications for investing in preschool programs for all children.

According to Walston and West (2004), national guidelines for alignment would help to decrease the vast disparities in standards that exist across the 50 states. Recent data show that almost every state reports that large proportions of their students are meeting high academic standards when measured by their state-developed standards and assessments; yet when the same students are scored on the federal National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), their proficiency levels are much lower. Furthermore, nearly 50% of children experience at least one school change between the start of kindergarten and the end of third grade.

DeVries, Reese-Learned, and Morgan (1991) closely observed three kindergarten classes using Direct Instruction, a constructivist approach based on child-initiated activities, and an eclectic approach. Analyzing two game-like activities, they found that the children from the constructivist class were more interpersonally interactive, with a greater number and variety of negotiation strategies and shared experiences, than children from the other two classes. The Direct Instruction class began kindergarten with

significantly higher achievement test scores than the constructivist class. However, the significant differences between the two classes disappeared by third grade.

Hirsh-Pasek, Hyson, and Rescorla (1990) conducted the Academic Environments study, involving 90 four- and five-year-olds in a variety of academic and child-initiated preschool programs in affluent areas in Philadelphia and Delaware and followed up 56 of them through the end of kindergarten. Preschool program type had no significant influence on children's academic or logical skills at the end of kindergarten.

Marcon (1992) identified three preschool models operated in the Washington, DC public schools—teacher-directed, child-initiated, and "middle-of-the-road"—and examined the development of a random sample of 295 children attending these types of programs. Children from child-initiated classes showed the greatest mastery of basic reading, language, and mathematics skills, followed by children from teacher-directed classes, then children from "middle-of-the-road" classes. At fourth grade, this same ranking of curriculum types appeared on children's grade point averages, overall and in most subject matter areas.

High/Scope Comparison Studies

Barnett (1995) suggests that studies of carefully controlled, high quality early childhood programs designed specifically to be "model" programs for disadvantaged students (e.g., High/Scope Perry Preschool and the Carolina Abecedarian Project) also show substantial short term positive outcomes in children's cognitive development, boosting at-risk children's achievement by nearly one-half.

Barnett, Robin, Hustedt, and Schulman (2003) discovered children in the High/Scope Perry Preschool study gained 8 points in their first year and a total of 14 points in 2 years. In other words, on average Head Start programs are achieving some success, but could be doing more to help children reach their potential. Forty states have now invested in state preschool programs for young children living in poverty or otherwise at special risk of school failure.

The Perry Pre-school Project, perhaps the most well-known of all High/Scope research efforts—examined the lives of 123 African-Americans born in poverty and at high risk of failing in school. From 1962–1967, at ages 3 and 4, the subjects were randomly divided into a program group who received a high-quality preschool program based on High/Scope's participatory learning approach and a comparison group who received no preschool program. In the study's most recent phase, 97% of the study participants still living were interviewed at age 40. Additional data were gathered from the subjects' school, social services, and arrest records. The study found that adults at age 40 who had the preschool program had higher earnings, were more likely to hold a job, had committed fewer crimes, and were more likely to have graduated from high school than adults who did not have preschool (Schweinhart & Weikart, 1997a, 1997b).

The High/Scope Preschool Curriculum Comparison study, which immediately followed the High/Scope Perry Preschool study, suggests that the curriculum had a lot to do with the findings. The comparison study found that young people born in poverty experienced fewer emotional problems and felony arrests if they attended a preschool

program that used the High/Scope model or a traditional Nursery School model rather than a Direct Instruction model (Schweinhart & Weikart, 1997a, 1997b).

Six early childhood curriculum comparison studies have been conducted in the past decade: one study contrasting High/Scope classes with non-High/Scope classes, and five studies contrasting developmentally appropriate practice emphasizing child-initiated activities and developmentally inappropriate practice emphasizing teacher-directed lessons (Dunn & Kontos, 1997).

Xiang and Schweinhart (2002) conducted a longitudinal study. The target population included children living in poverty, at risk for school failure and school readiness. Measures included the High/Scope Child Observation Record, School Readiness Rating Scale, and school records. Parent outcomes were provided via parent interviews and Child and Family Background Questionnaire. Program quality was assessed by High/Scope Program Quality Assessment. Major findings in the area of school readiness as compared to non-program participants showed that children scored significantly higher in over all development at kindergarten, were less likely to be retained in second through fourth grades, and had higher reading and math.

Teacher Training and Perceptions

Bogard and Takanishi (2005) suggest social and pedagogical experiences from PK through third grade are aligned across grade levels and aligned with the learning experiences research indicates children require based on their developmental capabilities. Teachers who are prepared to provide high-quality experiences across PK through third grade are a necessary component to this approach to education. This alignment

necessitates a master plan that intentionally lays out clear expectations for children at each grade level, aligns these expectations with classroom experiences that facilitate reaching the expectations, and multiple forms of assessment that provide information on whether or not children are progressing toward the expectations set out for them throughout the years from PK through third grade.

Pianta, Kraft-Sayre, Rimm-Kaurfman, Gercke, and Higgins (2001) explored transition practices and activities that are built collaboratively. A Collaborative Design Team (CDT) was established from a cross section of early childhood professionals. Members collectively identified community needs for transition to kindergarten and participated in all aspects of data gathering. CDT developed an ecological conceptual model that emphasized transition/continuity activities over longer time periods. Teachers and staff completed various instruments including "Transition to Kindergarten Activities Questionnaire." Parents answered similar questions in interviews. Three themes emerged: a need for various activities, building parent-teacher relationships, and emphasizing importance of preschool staff to support children's school readiness needs.

In the Training for Quality study, Eipstein (1993) found that observers rated preschool classes with High/Scope-trained teachers significantly higher than preschool classes whose teachers were not trained by High/Scope. High/Scope training enabled children to plan, carry out, and review their own activities, and it helped teachers use adult-child interaction to promote children's reasoning and language skills. Observers scored children in the High/Scope classes significantly higher at the end of the school

year in initiative, social relations, music and movement skills, and overall development Epstein (1993).

Burts (1992) engaged in a program of research based on assessing teachers' developmentally appropriate beliefs and practices and related child outcomes. They found that kindergarten children in developmentally inappropriate classes exhibited significantly more stress behaviors (such as complaints of feeling sick, stuttering, fights, tremors, nervous laughter, and nail biting) than did those in developmentally appropriate classes, particularly males and African-American children.

Hill (2001) explored the relationship between parenting behaviors and children's school performance, including academic socialization. This study questioned the relationships, primarily among African-American and low-income parents. A total of 103 African- and Euro-American kindergartners and their mothers from a southeastern semi-urban city provided pre-reading and pre-math child data from two subscales of the Metropolitan Readiness Test. Parents and/or teachers responded to their involvement, parenting behaviors and parents' expectations of their child's school performance. Parenting behaviors and teachers' perceptions supported the hypothesis that parents and teachers influence early literacy development of children from low-income households.

Summary

The results of the literature review reveal that early learning programs are highly essential. However, there is concern about the approach in which prekindergarten children are educated. The research reveals that there is a longstanding curriculum debate in early childhood education programs on whether early childhood education

should follow the traditional academic model of education used with older students (teacher-directed, formal instruction) or whether learning experiences for prekindergarten students should be informal and consist largely of child-initiated activities.

The majority of literature reviewed focused on the High/Scope curriculum and the benefits of prekindergarten. The results of the literature reveal that there are countless research studies conducted on preparing prekindergarten children academically. The literature suggests that there are numerous studies to support developmentally appropriate practices that encourage social, emotional, and intellectual growth.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study examined the issues associated with high-quality education and developmentally appropriate practices in teaching prekindergarten students. Specifically, this study examined prekindergarten teacher perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students in a Georgia Public School System. The following sections of this chapter include the theory of variables, definitions of variables, relationships among variables, research questions, and limitations of the study.

Theory of Variables

It is proposed that the perceptions prekindergarten teachers have about the High/Scope curriculum would explain the impact the High/Scope curriculum has on the academic performance of prekindergarten students when variables such as teacher training, teacher interpretation of the curriculum, teacher implementation of the curriculum, and teacher's academic standards of students are examined. It is also proposed that if prekindergarten teachers have a positive perception of the High/Scope curriculum, then prekindergarten student's academic performance is achieved.

Definition of Variables and Other Terms

Variables

Teacher perceptions refer to the teacher's awareness, understanding, and comprehension of the High/Scope curriculum.

Teacher training refers to the professional development teachers receive in order to acquire knowledge and skills about the High/Scope curriculum.

Teacher implementation refers to the manner in which the curriculum is put into effect by the teacher.

Teacher interpretation refers to the manner in which the meaning of the curriculum is conveyed by the teacher.

Teacher academic standards of students refers to the level or degree of excellence considered by teachers as a goal for student achievement.

Other Related Terms

Anecdotal notes refer to the written notes taken by teachers to objectively document interactions, behaviors, and skills for each individual student.

Assessment refers to the collection of information on each child in a regular and systematic manner to monitor children's interest, abilities, skills, and needs.

Bright from the Start refers to the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, which is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families.

Child-centered refers to active learning environments in which teachers strive to meet the needs of the student.

Child-initiated refers to the activities that children plan and carry-out themselves.

Content standards refer to Georgia's PK Content Standards, which were developed to provide a foundation for instruction in all PK classrooms. They reflect current educational research and are aligned with Georgia's Performance Standards for grades K- 12. The content standards are used for planning instruction and assessing child growth and Development in seven key curricular areas: Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Creative Expression, Social and Emotional Development, and Physical Development.

Curriculum refers to the educational philosophy for achieving desired educational outcomes through the presentation of an organized scope and sequence of activities involving every aspect of the PK program from planned activities and lessons to meals and informal conversations.

Curriculum goals refer to the detailed description of specific level of achievement expected of students

Developmentally appropriate practices refer to the knowledge of child development teachers use to identify the range of appropriate behaviors, activities and materials for a specific age group. This knowledge is used in conjunction with an understanding of each child in the classroom and his/her unique personalities, backgrounds and abilities to design the most appropriate learning opportunities to maximize growth and learning.

Direct-instruction refers to a rigorously developed, highly scripted method for teaching that is fast-paced and provides constant interaction between students and the teacher.

Evaluation refers to the information collected through assessment to plan learning experiences for individual children or groups of children.

Georgia Lottery PK refers to the prekindergarten programs funded by the proceeds of the Georgia Lottery for Education

High quality refers to programs that emphasize helping children achieve school readiness goals. Using developmentally appropriate practices, programs focus on growth in language and literacy, math concepts, science, arts, physical development, and personal and social competence.

High/Scope refers to the active learning educational curriculum approach.

Lead teacher refers to the certified PK classroom teacher.

Matrix refers to an arrangement of items into labeled rows and columns within a tablet that shows the relationship between two categories.

Paraprofessional refers to a teacher aide who assists the teacher with routine activities associated with teaching.

Play refers to self-paced, child-controlled pleasurable activities.

Portfolio refers to a collection of a student's work demonstrating specified competencies.

Prekindergarten also called "PK," refers to the academic classroom-based learning environment of four-year olds. PK is not required; however, it acts as a way to

prepare children (especially those of a disadvantaged population) to better succeed in a kindergarten.

Program Quality Assessment (PQA) refers to the program used in the state of Georgia to assist in identifying areas of strength and weakness in the instructional program.

Readiness refers to the skills and abilities that are basic for learning in an academic area.

Teacher-directed refers to activities that teachers plan and initiate.

Work-Sampling System refers to the instructional assessment used in this Georgia Public School System to document and assess PK children's skill, knowledge, behavior, and accomplishments across a wide variety of curriculum areas.

Relationship among Variables

Countless discussions about early childhood education often include the term developmental appropriateness. Prekindergarten curriculums have generated numerous concerns throughout the nation, and yet it continues to remain a controversial issue. The greatest concern is that children in classrooms that use the High/Scope curriculum are only socializing. However, related research studies have proven that teachers facilitate the learning of children (Hohmann & Weikart, 1995).

Additionally, research studies have found that children in active learning environments who participate in self-initiated learning experiences learn new ideas and skills in nearly every kind of play and activity. However, teacher perceptions, training,

interpretation and academic standards of students of students are essential to the implementation of these curriculum models (see Figure 1).

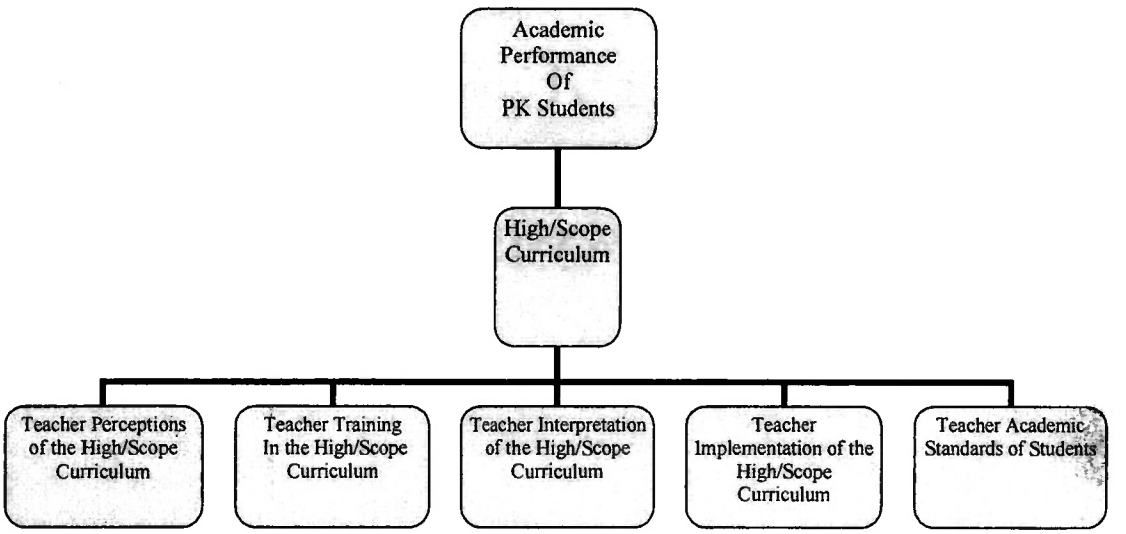


Figure 1. Relationship among Variables

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to prekindergarten teacher perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum in a Georgia Public School System. It was also limited to prekindergarten teachers who have received High/Scope teacher training.

Summary

This chapter presented a description of the theoretical framework used for this study. It described and defined the relationship between teacher perceptions, teacher training, teacher interpretation of the curriculum, teacher implementation of the

curriculum, and teacher academic standards of students. This chapter outlined the research questions, as well as, the limitations of the study.

GCHAPTER IV

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Qualitative research was selected for this study because it emphasized collecting descriptive data and allowed for openness and depth in studying prekindergarten teacher perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students in a Georgia Public School System.

There were several considerations decided upon to adopt a qualitative research methodology. Strauss and Corbin (1990) claim that qualitative methods can be used to better understand any phenomenon about which little is yet known. They can also be used to gain new perspectives on things about which much is already known, or to gain more in-depth information that may be difficult to convey quantitatively. Thus, qualitative methods are appropriate in situations where one needs to first identify the variables that might later be tested quantitatively, or where the researcher has determined that quantitative measures cannot adequately describe or interpret a situation.

A researcher must prepare a research design that utilizes accepted strategies for naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Teacher interviews, field observations, and document analysis were conducted to investigate prekindergarten teacher views related to their perception of the High/Scope curriculum and the impact the High/Scope curriculum has on the academic performance of prekindergarten students.

The particular design of a qualitative study depends on the purpose of the inquiry, what information will be most useful, and what information will have the most credibility. There are no strict criteria for sample size (Patton, 1990). "Qualitative studies typically employ multiple forms of evidence....[and] there is no statistical test of significance to determine if results 'count'" (Eisner, 1991, p. 39). Judgments about usefulness and credibility are left to the researcher and the reader.

The ability of qualitative data to more fully describe a phenomenon is an important consideration not only from the researcher's perspective, but from the reader's perspective as well.

Access and Entry Process

The superintendent's office, in this Georgia Public School System, officially will neither grant nor deny permission for research projects to be conducted with adults, because it might infringe upon the rights of the adult to choose to take part in research that is of particular interest to that person.

In view of that fact, research approval was not required from the school system to conduct this research. However, the district was made aware of this research, as it will contribute significantly to the Prekindergarten Program and the mission of this Georgia Public School System. Therefore, all necessary components of this research was submitted to the district.

Description of the Setting

This Georgia Public School System is located in a fast-paced growing community, serving predominately African-America children. The children in this

educational complex are labeled at-risk because they come from low social and economic backgrounds. More than 40 different languages or dialects are spoken by children attending school.

The Prekindergarten classrooms in this Georgia Public School System are funded by the Georgia Lottery and operated by the Bright from the Start Department of Early Care and Learning. Sites are available in both public school systems and private child care centers. This Georgia Public School System has twenty-eight classrooms in which each classroom has a certified teacher and a paraprofessional serving twenty prekindergarten students.

Sampling Procedures

The sampling procedures used for this study were through purposeful sampling. In qualitative research, the research sites and participants are selected following a strategy called purposeful sampling. Prekindergarten teachers with High/Scope training were purposefully selected for this study. Purposeful sampling, in contrast to probabilistic sampling, is "selecting information-rich cases for study in depth" (Patton, 1990, p. 169) when one wants to understand something about those cases without needing or desiring to generalize to all such cases.

Working with Human Subjects

All human subjects of this study were assured that the information collected would remain confidential. This message was communicated in written manner prior to interviews. Therefore, candid responses were displayed throughout the interview

sessions. The findings of this study were made available to the participants upon completion.

Instrumentation

The researcher, guided by professors from Clark Atlanta University, developed interview questions that consisted of open-ended questions allowing the participant to provide in-depth feed-back. The interview questions were specifically aimed at teacher perceptions, teacher training, teacher's interpretation of the curriculum, teacher's implementation of the curriculum, and teacher's academic standards of prekindergarten students.

Participants/Location of Research

There are 28 prekindergarten classrooms in this Georgia Public School System. Ten prekindergarten teachers were asked to participate voluntarily in individual interviews for this study. The benefit and purpose for selecting prekindergarten teachers in this Georgia Public School System were practical.

The Georgia Lottery Prekindergarten Program was established with a purpose of providing Georgia's four-year-old children with high-quality preschool experiences. The Georgia Public School System chosen for this study has been receiving the Georgia Lottery Funded Pre-K Grant since its inception in 1993.

Prekindergarten teachers in this Georgia Public School System have also received High/Scope training and teach using the High/Scope curriculum in their prekindergarten classrooms.

Data Collection Procedures

In qualitative research the researcher seeks to observe and interpret meanings in context. It is neither possible nor appropriate to finalize research strategies before data collection has begun (Patton, 1990). The two prevailing forms of data collection associated with qualitative inquiry are interviews and observation.

Data collection for this research consisted of interviews with teachers, audio-taped transcripts, field observations, and document analysis. Qualitative interviews were used as the primary strategy for data collection, in conjunction with observation, and document analysis.

The first step in the data collection process was documentation analysis. Document analysis refers to the materials such as photographs, videos, films, memos, letters, clinical case records, and memorabilia of all sorts that can be used as supplemental information as part of case study whose main data source is participant observation or interviewing (Bogdan & Biklen 2003).

Document analysis often provides insight into a setting or group of people that cannot be observed or noted in another way. Lincoln and Guba (1985) defined a document as "any written or recorded material" not prepared for the purposes of the evaluation or at the request of the inquirer.

The High/Scope Preschool Key Experiences, the Bright from the Start Georgia PK Program Content Standards, the Bright from the Start Program Quality Assessment, the Bright from the Start Work Sampling System Developmental Checklist, and the

Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-K Progress report informed the development of the interview and observation protocol.

The second step in the data collection process was the completion of interviews. The 2006-2007 prekindergarten teachers were interviewed during the second semester of the school year. There are approximately twenty-eight prekindergarten teachers in this Georgia Public School System. An interview guide was relied upon, with open-ended questions that were asked in semi-structured interview sessions, with ten teachers.

An interview guide or schedule is a list of questions or general topics that the interviewer wants to explore during each interview. Schedules and guides are used primarily to gather comparable data across sites (Bogdan & Biklen 2003). Although it is prepared to insure that basically the same information is obtained from each person, there are no predetermined responses.

The interview guide also ensured good use of limited interview time; they made interviewing multiple subjects more systematic and comprehensive; and they helped to keep interactions focused. In keeping with the flexible nature of qualitative research designs, interview guides can be modified over time to focus attention on areas of particular importance, or to exclude questions the researcher has found to be unproductive for the goals of the research (Lofland & Lofland, 1984).

By using semi-structured interviews, freedom to examine and explore within predetermined inquiry areas was able to occur. "In this type of interview either all of the questions are more flexibly worded, or the interview is a mix of more and less structured

questions. Usually, specific information is desired from all respondents" (Merriam, 1988).

The interviews were designed to acquire knowledge of teachers' background, training, education, and most importantly, gain a thorough understanding of teachers' perceptions about the High/Scope curriculum and the impact it has on prekindergarten student performance. Therefore, interview procedures followed one protocol. However, they were flexible in nature to allow for the opportunity to probe and allow for the accommodation of emergent issues, themes, and inconsistencies.

The third step in the data collection process was observation. It was essential to observe the teachers' physical environment following the interviews to further examine their teaching practices. Observation is a research tool when it (1) serves a formulated research purpose, (2) is planned deliberately, (3) is recorded systematically, and (4) is subjected to checks and controls on validity and reliability (Kidder, 1982b).

Observation is a major means of collecting data in qualitative research for the reason that it offers a firsthand account of the situation under study and, when combined with interviewing and document analysis, allows for a holistic interpretation of the phenomenon being investigated (Merriam, 1988).

There are various methods for gathering observational data, depending on the nature of a given project. Passive participant observations were conducted. "The ideal is to negotiate and adopt that degree of participation that will yield the most meaningful data about the program given the characteristics of the participants, the nature of staff-participant interactions, and the sociopolitical context of the program" (Patton, 1990).

Following the interviews and field observations a summary of the transcription was copied and given to each participant for review.

Description of Data Analysis Methods

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials a researcher accumulates to enable them to come up with findings.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) define qualitative data analysis as "working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (p. 145). Qualitative researchers tend to use inductive analysis of data, meaning that the critical themes emerge out of the data (Patton, 1990). Qualitative analysis required some creativity, for the challenge was to place the raw data into logical, meaningful categories; to examine them in a holistic fashion; and to find a way to communicate this interpretation to others.

Analysis began with identification of the themes emerging from the raw data, a process sometimes referred to as "open coding" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). During open coding, the conceptual categories were named and identified, into which the phenomena observed were grouped.

The goal of open-coding was to create descriptive, multi-dimensional categories which formed a preliminary framework for analysis. Words, phrases, and ideas that appeared to be similar were grouped into the same category. These categories were gradually modified or replaced during the subsequent stages of analysis that followed.

Methods for Establishing Data Validity and Reliability

Validity is defined as an indication of how well an assessment actually measures what it is supposed to measure. The quality of the data and the appropriateness of the methods employed are particularly important in the social sciences because of the different philosophical and methodological approaches to the study of human activity.

Reliability is the consistency between the data collected and reported and the empirical world being studied. It refers more to the accuracy of the researcher's description of the research site and subjects than with his or her interpretation of what the findings mean or how they relate to other research and theory. Semi-structured interviews were conducted for the purpose of capturing the expression of opinions or beliefs of the respondents (Merriam, 1988).

Member checking and triangulation was used to establish data validity and reliability. Member checking allowed each participant the opportunity to clarify some of the data that was collected throughout this study. It was one way to confirm that the categories and patterns derived from the data accurately portrayed the attitudes of the participants.

The internal validity of this study was ensured through triangulation. Triangulation, which involved the convergence of data from multiple data collection sources, was important because, if the data collected using different methods showed the same pattern, that pattern was more credible. This study was triangulated using interviews, observations, and document analysis. This technique has received much

criticism because it "assumes a single fixed reality that can be known objectively." However it is believed to be a useful tool for qualitative research (Seale, 1999).

The main purpose of qualitative research is not to generalize the findings, but to explore a unique interpretation of events (Merriam, 1988). Since external validity in the traditional sense cannot be applied to qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that researchers should think about the transferability of the results obtained from qualitative data.

Merriam (1988) described three ways that a researcher can improve the generalizability or transferability of qualitative findings:

1. Provide a "rich, thick description," so anyone who is interested in transferability has a basis on which to make this judgment.
2. Establish the typicality of the case, that is, describe how typical an individual is compared with others in the same class, so readers can make comparisons with their own situations.
3. Conduct a cross-case analysis, that is, an analysis across multiple cases that builds an integrated framework.

The external validity of this study was achieved by interviewing ten different prekindergarten teachers, each from different schools in the county, and conducting observations, which can be generalized to a large population. Leaving the decision of generalizability of the study up to the readers, allows the reader to find the similarities between their own situation and the context of the study, and then translate or adjust the findings for their situation (Merriam, 1998).

Researchers in the qualitative tradition sometimes refuse to speak of research instruments, but it is possible to do field-work within a qualitative tradition and design data recording sheets to guide analysis of in-depth interviewing or of participant observation events. It is also possible to design data sheets to facilitate document analysis, so it is possible to address reliability issues regarding the consistency of methods for recording data. These methods influenced the type of data that was accessible, and the way in which the data was interpreted and analyzed.

Summary

This chapter presented a description of the methods and procedures used to conduct this study. A description of the population that was used to complete the study was described. Also, a description of the measures used to collect and analyze the data was included. Interviews, observations and document analysis regarding prekindergarten teacher perceptions were conducted.

CHAPTER V

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Overview of the Data Collection Process

Data presentation and analysis is a description of the data collection methods employed and the analysis of data to determine prekindergarten teacher perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students in this Georgia Public School System.

Documents, interviews with teachers, and field observations, generated the data presented in this study. The documents, interviews with teachers, and observations, involved a three-phase data collection process, during the second semester of the 2006-2007 academic school year.

Description of Data Collection Procedures and Data Analysis

Documents

The first phase of the data collection process was the collection and examination of documents obtained to inform the development of the interview protocol and observations.

The documents were beneficial for several reasons. First, they served as a framework to examine prekindergarten teaching practices, in order to determine prekindergarten teacher perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the

academic performance of prekindergarten students. Second, they examined the criteria employed to assess prekindergarten teaching practices, in this Georgia Public School System. Third, they were extremely relevant to the research questions and further strengthened the five dimensions of this study: teacher perceptions of High/Scope, teacher training in High/Scope, teacher interpretation of High/Scope, teacher implementation of High/Scope, and teacher academic standards of students.

Prologue to Document Enquiry

It took one week to collect and examine documents. Official documents were available via the internet through the High/Scope Educational Foundation and the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. For that reason, the process of collecting materials was expedient and uncomplicated.

After careful examination, it was determined that the Bright from the Start Program Quality Assessment, the High/Scope Preschool Key Experiences, the Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-k Program Content Standards, the Bright from the Start Work Sampling System Developmental Checklist, and the Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-K Progress Report, would greatly benefit the research for this study.

Official Documents

Bright from the Start Program Quality Assessment

The Bright from the Start Program Quality Assessment is used to evaluate programs and to identify program strengths and areas in need of improvement. Scoring is; Not Met (NM), Partially Meets (PM), Meets (M), and Exceeds (E). Programs are evaluated in four areas: Program Administration, Physical Learning Environment,

Instruction and Curriculum, and Transition and Family Involvement (Georgia Department of Education, 2005).

The Bright from the start Program Quality Assessment (PQA) that is used by State consultants to evaluate prekindergarten classrooms has 162 indicators that must be met by prekindergarten teachers in order to receive an all "Meets" evaluation. A maximum of 224 indicators must be met to receive an all "Exceeds" evaluation. An assessment with less than 162 of the indicators satisfied will result in a "Partially Met" evaluation. An assessment with less than 81 of the indicators satisfied will result in a "Not Met" evaluation.

High/Scope Preschool Key Experiences

The High/Scope Key Experiences are a framework for interpreting child development based on child observation, developmental theory, and research. They are organized into the domains of creative representation, language and literacy, initiative and social relations, movement, music, classification, seriation, number, space, and time (Hohmann & Weikart, 1995).

The High/Scope key experiences serve as a guide for prekindergarten teachers to plan and assess learning. Prekindergarten teachers in this Georgia Public School System are not evaluated by the High/Scope Foundation.

Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-k Program Content Standards

The Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-k Program Content Standards are used for planning instruction, assessing growth and development, and sharing information with parents. These standards are important for a number of reasons; the most important are:

1. Because PK children learn and develop at varying rates, instruction must be planned to meet each child's individual needs.
2. PK children learn best with a balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities that encourage thinking, reasoning and communication.
3. Pre-k children need movement, hands-on activities, lots of language, and a supportive environment.

They are organized into the domains of language and literacy, math, science, social studies, creative expression, social and emotional, and health and physical development (Georgia Department of Education, 2005)

Bright from the Start Work Sampling System Developmental Checklist

The Bright from the Start Work Sampling System Developmental Checklist was designed to enhance the process of observation and to ensure the reliability and consistency of teacher's observations. The guidelines incorporate state and national standards of curriculum development and teaching practices (Dichtelmiller, Mablon, Marsden, & Meisels, 2001).

The Work Sampling Developmental Checklist is used to facilitate use of the Work Sampling Guidelines in classroom assessment, listing performance indicators. The indicators are organized in domains of personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, the arts, and physical development and health (Dichtelmiller, Mablon, Marsden, and Meisels, 2001).

Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-K Progress Report

The Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-K Progress Report is an assessment used by teachers to rate the social and emotional language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, creative expression, and physical development of prekindergarten students.

Prologue to Emergent Themes and Analysis

It was quite evident that the documents were very detailed and specific. However, without accurate analysis, relevancy, and practical recommendations, these documents could prove to be irrelevant.

Conducting a close analysis of the documents and identifying emergent themes was essential to the benefit of developing interview protocol and observations. The emergent themes were identified after careful examination of the documents. The analyses of the documents revealed linkages among the different documents reviewed.

Emergent Themes Derived from Documents

Teaching guides used to assist teachers with instruction are indistinguishable. The examination of documents used to develop the interview protocol and observations revealed that prekindergarten teachers in this Georgia Public School System have an enormous amount of detailed criteria to adhere to. A closer look at the data revealed that the different documents utilized to assist prekindergarten teachers with instruction are quite the same.

The *High/Scope Key Experiences* are organized into the domains of creative expression, language and literacy, initiative and social relations, movement, music, classification, seriation, number, space, and time.

Data reveled that the *Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-K Program Content Standards* are organized into similar domains of language and literacy, math, science, social studies, creative expression, social and emotional, and health and physical development.

A closer look at the documents revealed that the *Work Sampling System Developmental Checklist* indicators are organized into the domains of language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific, social studies, arts, and physical and health performance.

Additionally, it was revealed that the *Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-k Progress Report* indicators are also organized into the domains of social and emotional, language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, creative expressions, and physical development.

Assessments used to monitor student progress are repetitive and extensive. The examination of documents reveals that prekindergarten teachers utilize four different methodologies to monitor, measure, and assess student progress, which further support the analysis that prekindergarten teachers have an enormous amount of detailed criteria to adhere to. It was also reveled that these assessment methodologies are relatively quite similar in nature.

First, are the High/Scope key experiences that are used as a framework for interpreting child development. It is revealed that the High/Scope key experiences serve as tools in assisting teachers with planning and "assessing" learning.

Prekindergarten teachers are supported by 58 High/Scope Key Experiences that serve as tools in assisting teachers with observing, describing, and supporting children's development.

Second, the *Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-k Content Standards* are also used for planning instruction and "assessing growth and development." Data revealed that the *Georgia Pre-K Program Content Standards* consist of 38 language and literacy development indicators, 31 mathematical development indicators, 18 scientific development indicators, 12 social development indicators, 11 creative development indicators, and 19 social and emotional development indicators—totaling 129 developmental performance indicators used by prekindergarten teachers to plan and assess learning.

Data also revealed that the *Work Sampling Developmental Checklist* is used to facilitate "classroom assessment," listing performance indicators. The Bright from the Start Work Sampling System Developmental Checklist is used by prekindergarten teachers to rate student performance three times a year during the school year. There are 8 personal and social development indicators, 12 language and literacy indicators, 8 mathematical thinking indicators, 3 scientific indicators, 8 social studies indicators, 4 indicators in the arts, and 7 physical development and health performance indicators, comprising a total of 50 performance indicators used by teachers to facilitate classroom assessment. Finally, the Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-k Progress Report is an "assessment" used by prekindergarten teachers to rate student performance.

The Georgia Pre-k Progress Report is rated by prekindergarten teachers to assess student development. The developmental areas assessed are social and emotional (personal and social), language and literacy, mathematics (mathematical thinking), science (scientific thinking), social studies, creative expression (the arts), and physical development (physical development and health). It is used to maintain permanent documentation, as well as, required conferences with parents informing them of their child's developmental progress.

Prekindergarten teachers assess students in the fall and the spring indicating whether a child is "As Expected" or "Needs Development." Additionally, teachers provide comments giving the reasons for "needs development" and/or noting special strengths and talents in each domain.

Teacher Interviews

The second phase of the data collection process was teacher interviews. Teachers were asked to participate in phase two of the data collection process in order to obtain demographic data and respond to open-ended questions. The primary data presented in this study are a compilation of teacher perceptions, thoughts, and feelings in semi-structured interviews with ten teachers, at each of their respective school sites.

The 10 prekindergarten teachers that were asked to participate voluntarily in individual interviews for this study have received High/Scope training and teach using the High/Scope curriculum in their prekindergarten classrooms. This Georgia Public School System serves predominantly African-American children. Therefore, the racial composition of prekindergarten teachers who voluntarily participated for this study was

70% African-American and 30% percent white. The description of prekindergarten teachers was all female. There were no male prekindergarten teachers in this Georgia Public School System at the time of data collection.

Prologue to Prekindergarten Teacher Interview Sessions

It took two days to schedule interview sessions with each of the ten prekindergarten teachers. Scheduling times to meet with each prekindergarten teacher was an expedient process, as all ten teachers were extremely receptive and willing to participate.

Interviews occurred, everyday after school throughout the duration of two weeks. In order to provide convenience to prekindergarten teachers, interview sessions took place in each of the ten prekindergarten teachers' classrooms; with the exception of one, which was held in the Media Center.

An excellent rapport had already been developed, as a result of prekindergarten teachers and the interviewer collaborating as colleagues in several informal and formal work related meetings prior to the interview sessions. For that reason, the mood was relaxed, contributing to teachers responding candidly.

Prekindergarten Teacher Demographic Data

The presentation of raw data is intended to provide a complete and comprehensible image of the voices of the perceptions of prekindergarten teachers used in this study. First, the raw data for each prekindergarten teacher's response is presented in their entirety. Secondly, a graph and explanation is presented for each set of responses. Additionally, to grasp the fundamental nature of the student perceptions in

each of the five dimensions, emergent themes were derived from each set of data. Finally, the analysis is presented for each set of themes under each dimension.

How many years have you been teaching?

Teacher 1: Since 1974

Teacher 2: 4 years

Teacher 3: 6 years

Teacher 4: 17 years

Teacher 5: 11 years

Teacher 6: 20 years in Florida and 3 years in Georgia

Teacher 7: 10 years

Teacher 8: 30 years

Teacher 9: 10 years

Teacher 10: 12 years

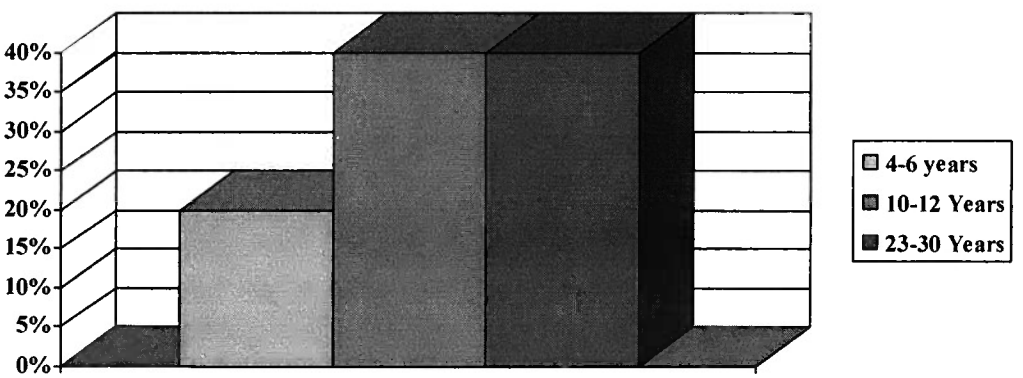


Figure 2. Teachers' Responses to Number of Years Teaching

Teachers in this study had many years of experience in education. Teachers on average had fifteen years of teaching experience. 20% of the teachers had been teaching for 4-6 years. 40% had been teaching for 10-12 years. 40% had been teaching for 23-30 years.

How many years have you been teaching prekindergarten?

Teacher 1: 17 years

Teacher 2: 3 years

Teacher 3: 5 years

Teacher 4: 4 years

Teacher 5: 11 years

Teacher 6: 13 years

Teacher 7: 5 years

Teacher 8: 6 years

Teacher 9: 6 years

Teacher 10: 6 years

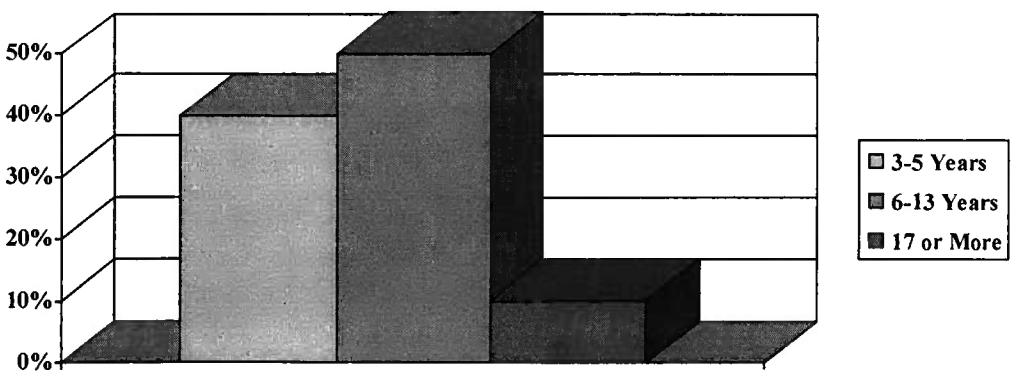


Figure 3. Teachers' Responses to Number of Years Teaching Kindergarten

Teachers in this study averaged seven years of experience teaching prekindergarten. Forth percent of the teachers had 3-5 years experience teaching prekindergarten, 50% had 6-13 years experience, and 10% had 17 years or more teaching experience

What is the highest credential that you currently hold?

Teacher 1: Specialist Degree in Curriculum Instruction

Teacher 2: Master's Degree

Teacher 3: Master's Degree

Teacher 4: Master's in Counseling

Teacher 5: Master's Degree

Teacher 6: B.S. (working on Master's Degree)

Teacher 7: B.A. in early Childhood Education, M.A. in Educational Leadership, and two years toward Doctorate Degree

Teacher 8: T-6 Certificate

Teacher 9: Bachelor's Degree

Teacher 10: Bachelor's Degree

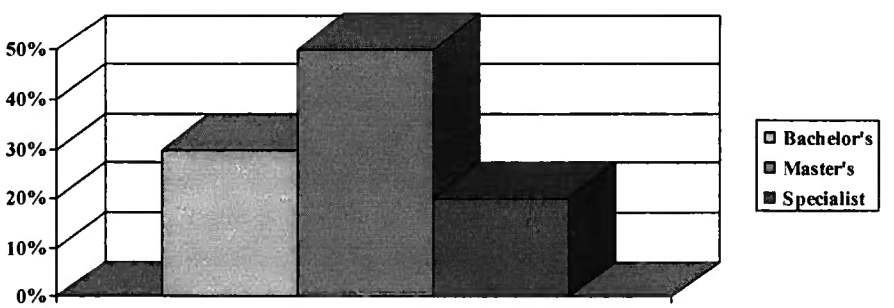


Figure 4. Teachers' Responses to Highest Degree Earned

Prekindergarten teachers in this study were well educated. Fifty percent of the teachers interviewed for this study had a Master's Degree. Twenty percent of the teachers had a Specialist Degree and thirty percent had Bachelor's Degrees.

Prekindergarten Teacher Perceptions of the High/Scope Curriculum

How do you believe your perception of the High/Scope curriculum impacts the academic performance of your students?

Teacher 1: High/Scope is not necessarily a curriculum.

Teacher 2: If you had a trainer who knew what they were talking about and who was effectively trained in High/Scope and redelivered it to you, than some of the components of High/Scope can be used to have a positive impact.

Teacher 3: Depends upon training. What you learned from your training and how you implement what you use impacts the performance of PK students.

Teacher 4: I believe if I followed the High/Scope program completely, my children would not be prepared by K standards for kindergarten

Teacher 5: High/Scope impact the student's performance by giving them the opportunity to explore their environment. Students like to pretend what they see adults doing.

Teacher 6: Your perception is different when you are trained by someone who believes in the program and has done the program for many years.

Teacher 7: I am in favor of High/Scope.

Teacher 8: If teachers do not have a good perception than student performance would not be as high because instead of doing the activities and giving the children choice, they may give them worksheets and limit the areas the children go to instead of giving them a choice to go to each area in the room. They probably would not put out as many activities and materials that the kids need to have for hands-on experiences.

Teacher 9: When you have good training you adapt it into your teaching. Trainer was really good.

Teacher 10: My perception of the High/Scope curriculum increases my students academic standards. My instructor had a different perception of High/Scope than mine.

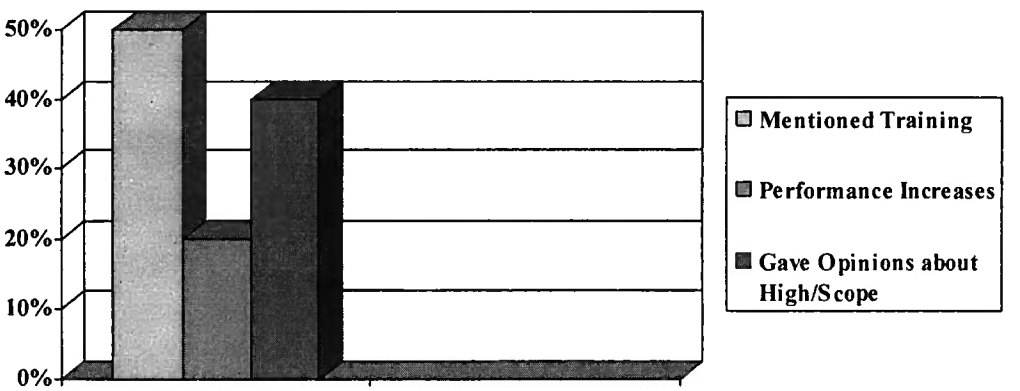


Figure 5. Teachers' Perceptions of the High/Scope Curriculum and Academic Performance of Students

Twenty percent of the teachers interviewed for this study said student performance increases when asked, "How do you believe your perception of the High/Scope curriculum impacts the academic performance of prekindergarten students?" Ten percent of the teachers said they were in favor of the High/ Scope curriculum. Another 10% felt that if they followed the curriculum in its entirety, students would not be prepared for kindergarten.

An unexpected 10% of the teachers felt High/Scope is not necessarily a curriculum. Ten percent talked about the opportunity High/Scope gives children to explore their environment. An overwhelming 50% of the teachers mentioned training when asked about their perception of the curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students.

How strongly do you support the philosophy of the High/Scope curriculum?

Teacher 1: Supportive of room arrangement, domains, scheduling, sequential order and socializing. High/Scope provides order and routine. However, it is not necessarily a curriculum model to follow. Pre-k teachers need to have a curriculum they can follow and not feel limited to the fact that they can bring in other resources. I feel better when you have something to guide you through.

Teacher 2: I agree with play and the socializing.

Teacher 3: High/Scope is not a kindergarten readiness curriculum at all.

Teacher 4: I strongly support work-time, and individualized instruction during table time. Small group needs to be more formalized with teacher-directed activities. I do not support free-choice. I agree with work time.

Teacher 5: If I followed the High/Scope curriculum completely my children would not be prepared by "K" standards for kindergarten.

Teacher 6: I like High/Scope. It is a good curriculum.

Teacher 7: Strongly agree with the philosophy; especially small group and work time. Have some reservations, like not being able to focus on a letter of the week

Teacher 8: I strongly support High/Scope. It is a very good curriculum. You have to add to it (like the Language Arts Series). It teaches life skills, promotes hands-on learning, and provides a variety of experiences. It gives the children a lot of choice with different levels of learning.

Teacher 9: I strongly believe in High/Scope for the majority of the students. I believe in it and support the overall approach because it works. On a scale of 1-10, I would rate it a 9. Taught kindergarten prior to PK and the developmental approaches have helped to clarify meaning in PK learning styles.

Teacher 10: I strongly support High/Scope.

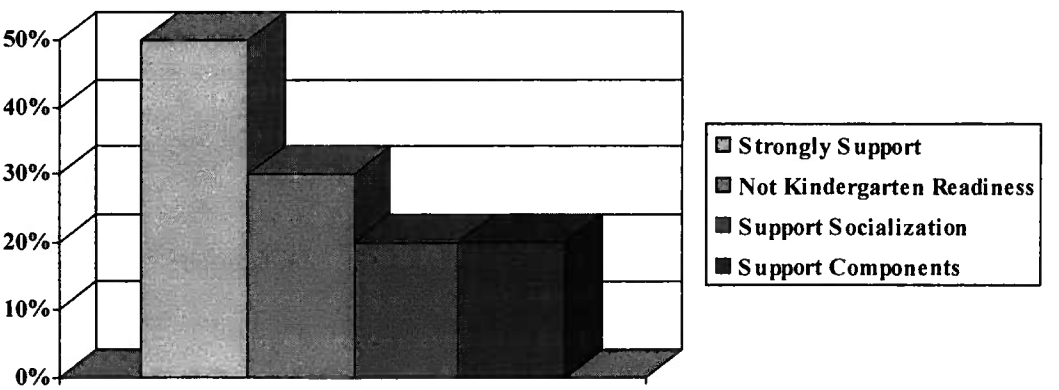


Figure 6: Teachers' Responses to Philosophy of the High/Scope Curriculum?

Forty percent of the teachers interviewed said they strongly support the philosophy of the High/Scope curriculum. Ten percent agreed, but had some reservations, like not being able to focus on a letter of the week. Thirty percent of teachers believe it is not a kindergarten readiness curriculum at all, and if they followed it completely there students would not be prepared for kindergarten by kindergarten standards.

Ten percent of the teachers interviewed say they strongly support work-time and individualized instruction. Twenty percent said they support the socialization. Ten percent said they support room arrangement, domains, and scheduling, but feel it is not a curriculum to teach.

How effective do you feel the High/Scope approach is, as it relates to preparing prekindergarten students for kindergarten?

Teacher 1: High/Scope does a good job of preparing children socially and provides language exposure. Kindergarten teachers want PK students to know how to listen, follow directions, and use self-control.

Teacher 2: High/Scope is ineffective academically based, but is effective for teaching social skills. They learn to make right and wrong choices. However, prekindergarten students are not really prepared when they get to kindergarten with the skills they need to know.

Teacher 3: Depends on how you were trained, how you implement it, and how adamant you are as a teacher. Basic High/Scope is not effective. As an educator,

you have to boost it up a level. It is not kindergarten readiness. Kindergarten has new letter sounds that we are not teaching. We are doing the opposite of kindergarten.

Teacher 4: Socialization is excellent and can stand alone. High/Scope cannot stand alone for kindergarten preparation. We have them in PK and some preparation needs to be going on to get them ready for kindergarten.

Teacher 5: High/Scope is not effective by itself. It has to have a supplemental curriculum in order to be effective. Standing alone it is not effective. It has to have something to pull in the basic skills children need to go to kindergarten

Teacher 6: High/Scope is very effective. It teaches motor skills, social and emotional development, hand-eye coordination.

Teacher 7: Depends on the teacher. High/Scope lacks a lesson plans. Everybody is on their on. It is hard if you just follow High/Scope strictly to get them ready for kindergarten. Children are not going to learn.

Teacher 8: High/Scope is a very effective program that teaches social, emotional, and life skills. It is an opportunity for students to write and build small motor skills. It prepares them academically for kindergarten, although they have to make some adjustment.

Teacher 9: On scale of 1-10, I would rate it a 6. Not now, maybe 10 years ago. High/Scope teaches social skills, developmental skills, emotional skills, but not academics. Kindergarten standards are too high and PK standards are too low, it needs to be a combination of both.

Teacher 10: That's where we drop the ball, in Pre-K, but not individual teachers" High/Scope doesn't limit you, it gives you a basis to go from. It gives you a framework.

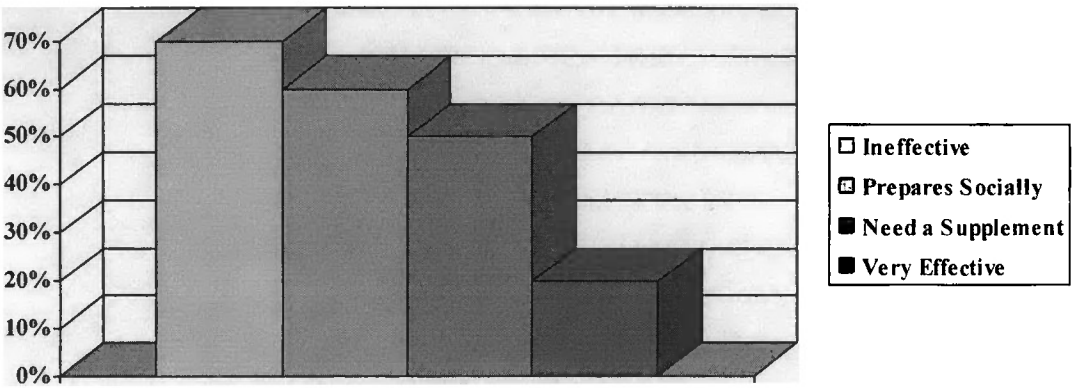


Figure 7. Teachers' Responses Regarding the Effectiveness of the High/Scope Approach

Seventy percent of the teachers interviewed believe High/Scope is ineffective when asked, "How effective do you feel the High/Scope approach is, as it relates to preparing prekindergarten students for kindergarten?" Twenty percent, however, believe High/Scope is very effective in preparing children for kindergarten.

Sixty percent of the teachers said High/Scope is effective in preparing children socially, while an additional twenty percent believes it prepares them emotionally. Ten percent said it is effective in providing language exposure.

Fifty percent of the teachers interviewed said they need a supplemental curriculum to prepare students for kindergarten. Ten percent believe kindergarten standards are too high while prekindergarten standards are too low. Ten percent said

teachers should simply use High/Scope as a framework for preparing prekindergarten students for kindergarten, while 30% said it just depends on the teacher.

Prekindergarten Teacher Training in High/Scope

How long was your High/Scope training?

Teacher 1: Training was one year, two days a month.

Teacher 2: Training was two weeks.

Teacher 3: My training was two weeks.

Teacher 4: My training was only one week.

Teacher 5: I was in training two weeks.

Teacher 6: One year once a month in Florida.

Teacher 7: Two weeks. One week of training in October, and one week in November.

Teacher 8: Two weeks. October and Spring.

Teacher 9: Two weeks. Ten days straight.

Teacher 10: Two weeks, fall and spring.

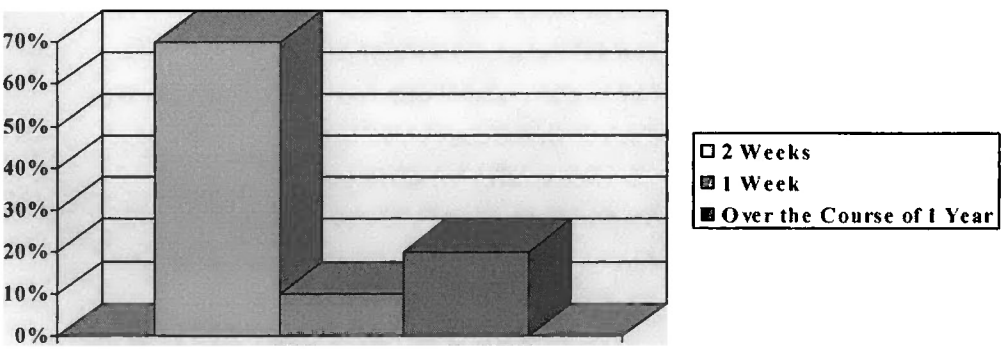


Figure 8. Teachers' Responses to High/Scope Training

Seventy percent of the prekindergarten teachers interviewed for this study had two-weeks of High/Scope Training. Twenty percent received training over the course of one year. Ten percent received one week of training.

Surprisingly, one of the participants interviewed had actually been trained in Florida by founder, David P. Weikart.

How would you describe your High/Scope training experience?

Teacher 1: Training was thorough. You had ample time for trial, error, and practice. I was able to contact trainers without intimidation. However, it needs to be more hands-on. (I did not receive proper training in Work Sampling).

Teacher 2: Detailed and step by step. Trainer was really good.

Teacher 3: Training was before school began w/follow-up support from instructor. It needs to be up-dated through training with changes in High/Scope.

Teacher 4: Training was very overwhelming, but the ideas were really good. It was not negative or positive. It gave me what I needed to go on.

Teacher 5: Training was "how to plan with students" did not lend to teachers planning from their own experience.

Teacher 6: Received training from David Weikart. If you are taught by a man who raises horses, you will have a better understanding about horses.

Teacher 7: Had a good trainer. High/Scope training was informational and hands-on. I learned a lot about lesson plans, circle time, scheduling, setting-up classroom, areas, ideas for large and small group, variety of songs, and ideas for transitions.

Teacher 8: Meaningful hands-on activities that explained High/Scope and the High/Scope daily schedule with songs for transitions.

Teacher 9: Training was wonderful. Trainer was very supportive in transition from one school to another.

Teacher 10: The outlook of High/Scope was emphasized. I had never heard of High/Scope prior to training. I received the basic understanding of High/Scope from training.

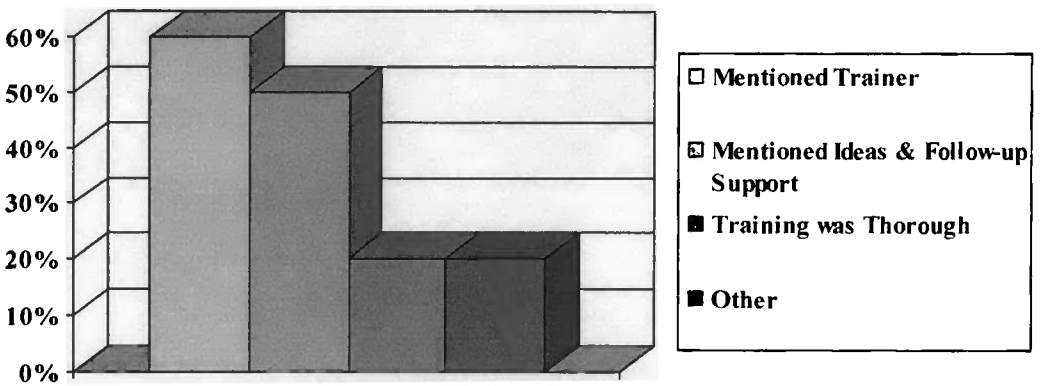


Figure 9. Teachers' Reponses to High/Scope Training Experience

Sixty percent of the teachers spoke highly of their High/Scope trainer when asked about their High/Scope training experience. Fifty percent of the teachers mentioned the hands-on activities and ideas they received from training. Additionally, another 50% mentioned the follow-up support they received after training, while 10% reflected on how overwhelming their training was, and lacked on-going communication.

Twenty percent of the teachers thought training was thorough and detailed and ten percent thought training provided a basic understanding of the High/Scope approach.

How does the High/Scope training you received impact the academic performance of your students?

Teacher 1: Training should not be 4 or 5 months after school has started. Teachers who have initially had High/Scope training need to have their required yearly training earlier in the school year.

Teacher 2: Learned how to plan for your small groups, how not to do rote memorization, but how you can incorporate different activities to foster those skills.

Teacher 3: Was able to implement strategies after training and then receive more training to continue to implement strategies. There were a lot of things that I had questions about that I did not agree with that just did not work for me.

Teacher 4: There was not any on-going communication after training and for about nine months; therefore, I was not as confident. However, I was fortunate because for undergraduate studies I worked for an Early Childhood Research Center at a college with 4 and 5 year olds.

Teacher 5: The training I received has helped me to learn to plan according to the group. However, the training was not that effective because the students want to play and High/Scope lead teachers are required to plan according to the needs of the children. This is not acceptable when teaching children skills.

Teacher 6: Prior to receiving certificate, I had to sit before a board for a 7 ½ hour interview. I received my CDA in Florida and had 30 Hours of training

Teacher 7: Training has enhanced my teaching. I learned how to handle children and get on their eye-level.

Teacher 8: Every teacher that uses High/Scope needs to be trained in High/Scope. High/Scope training really helped. It was insightful and the activities were very meaningful. Training support was available via telephone.

Teacher 9: Training made sense, but was not as easy to implement after training. I relied heavily upon Creative Curriculum.

Teacher 10: Because I was very disgusted with my trainer's perception of High/Scope, I don't think my kids had any academic success in my 1st year of implementing the program. Once I read High/Scope I was better, because I understood High/Scope.

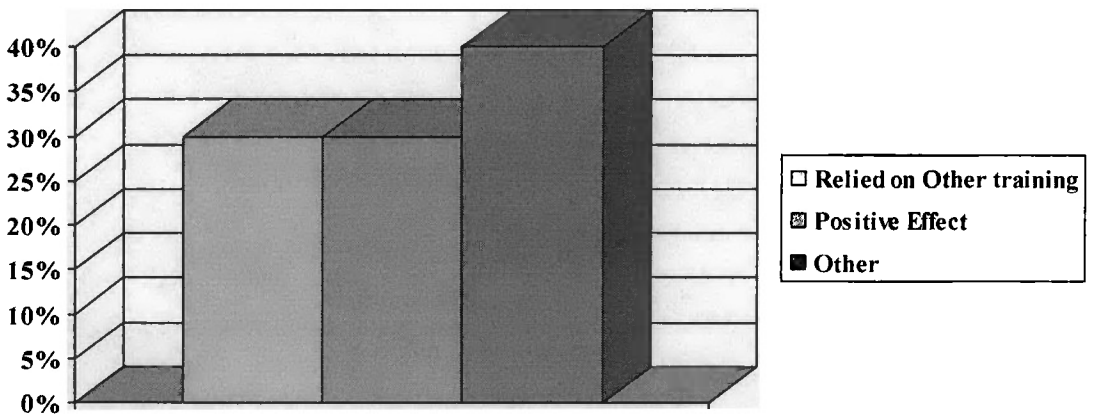


Figure 10. Teachers' Reponses Regarding Impact of High/Scope Training on Academic Performance of Students?

Thirty percent of the teachers said they heavily relied on teacher experience and training from other curriculums when asked, "How does the training you received impact the academic performance of students?" Simultaneously, another 30% of the teachers mentioned the positive effect of being able to receive training, implement strategies, and then receive more training.

Ten percent of the teachers interviewed felt they needed to be trained earlier in the school year, when asked about the impact training had on their student's academic performance, whereas another 10% said they received their training prior to the opening of the school year.

Ten percent of the teachers said they learned how to plan activities to foster specific skills from training. Another 10% felt their training experience enhanced their teaching abilities. While sadly, 10% of the population of teachers interviewed felt, in their first year with the program, their students did not have any academic success as a result of their training.

Prekindergarten Teacher Interpretation of High/Scope

How do you interpret the High/Scope approach?

Teacher 1: Socialization. High/Scope is a systematic curriculum that has clearly defined areas. It is a model for setting up your classroom. If High/Scope wanted you to play all day they would not have small group time.

Teacher 2: High/Scope is not academically based and focused.

Teacher 3: Free-choice

Teacher 4: Free choice. Learn to play-play to learn.

Teacher 5: High/Scope blends the students on how to work independently and cooperatively.

Teacher 6: Combination of social and developmental. There is no pressure or stress on children

Teacher 7: Socialization, school readiness, kindergarten preparation, encourages parent communications.

Teacher 8: Socialization; Choice; Kids interacting with other kids. High/Scope teaches them to interact appropriately. It is an opportunity for kids to experience hands-on activities. Builds their verbal skills. High/Scope has added more academics over the years [with CCPS accountability].

Teacher 9: Child-centered focusing on children's developmental needs.

Teacher 10: Children's interest. (You can get a child interested in a piece of string if you want them to be). The High/Scope approach is hands-on and it is not saying that you must only play. It is not saying unstructured and it does not mean chaos.

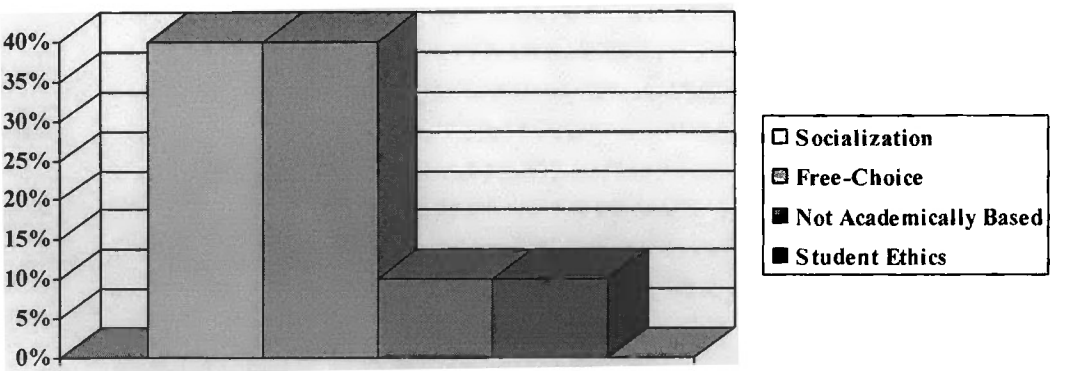


Figure 11. Teachers' Interpretation of the High/Scope Approach

Forty percent of the teachers interviewed internalized socialization as the primary focus of High/Scope when asked, "How do you interpret the High/Scope approach?" Another 40% interpret High/Scope to mean free-choice and child-centered.

Ten percent of the teachers interviewed interpret High/Scope not to be academically based or focused, and 10% said the mission of High/Scope is to blend students on how to work independently and cooperatively.

Prekindergarten Teacher Implementation of High/Scope

How do you implement the High/Scope curriculum?

Teacher 1: Teacher experience, following the schedule and relying on the domains.

Teacher 2: Scheduling and routine.

Teacher 3: Lesson plans, scheduling, and assessment.

Teacher 4: The main focus of High/Scope is table time, work-time scheduling, set-up, lesson plans and assessment. I incorporate High/Scope, Scholastic, phonics and other teacher-directed activities covering all areas of academics. Children's interests are incorporated in teacher-directed activities.

Teacher 5: Routine set-up, centers, safe areas, boundaries.

Teacher 6: Small group, interaction w/children, anecdotal notes, center-based classroom.

Teacher 7: Daily routine, home visits, plan-do-review, field trips, follow schedule strictly.

Teacher 8: Daily schedule, plan-do-review, large group, small group, children can go to any area, large amount of materials and activities.

Teacher 9: Children's interest, developmentally appropriate, fun-based, plan-do-review, routines, picture schedule, daily schedule.

Teacher 10: Children learn through play. Play at school is not the same as play at home. Play is structured and facilitated with meaning behind the fun activities.

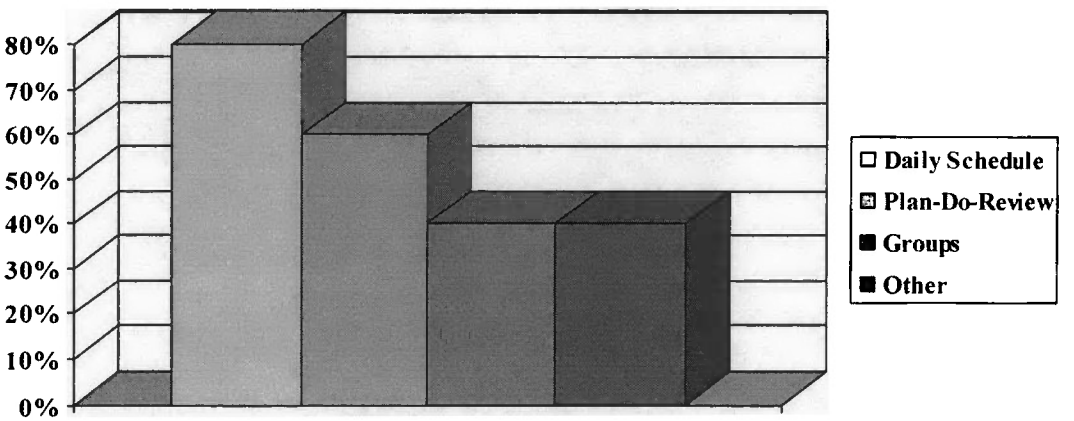


Figure 12. Teachers' Implementation of the High/Scope Curriculum

Eighty percent of the teachers interviewed feel they are implementing the High/Scope curriculum by following the High/Scope daily schedule. Sixty percent believe they are successfully implementing the curriculum by incorporating the plan-do-review sequence.

Forty percent of the teachers interviewed said they implement High/Scope through large and small-group. Twenty percent cited assessment. Another 20% mentioned lesson plans, while an additional 20% percent mentioned room arrangement.

A final 10% said they implement the High/Scope curriculum by relying on the domains for learning.

Prekindergarten Teacher Academic Standards of Students

What criteria do you feel are important in evaluating prekindergarten student performance?

Teacher 1: Some performance in all 7 domains to evaluate strengths and weaknesses.

Teacher 2: The County should align the PK curriculum with kindergarten standards.

Teacher 3: Observation and matrix

Teacher 4: Observation, Work-Sampling checklist, teacher made pre-post test for accountability (if it is to be research-based), GGG assessment from previous year and portfolios.

Teacher 5: High-Reach and observation

Teacher 6: I do not believe in testing, testing is a one time measure. I believe in portfolios. Children draw pictures in the beginning. Portfolios assess children where they start, provides a middle assessment, and an ending. Children need to have social and emotional skills before going into kindergarten.

Teacher 7: Literacy, letter recognition, socialization, imagination-creativity, hand writing introduction, rhyming, alliteration, motor skills, critical thinking, sharing, and being friendly.

Teacher 8: The seven domains, teacher-made assessment, matrix, High/Scope, and anecdotal notes.

Teacher 9: In favor of anecdotal notes. I do not like portfolios because children want to keep their work. I conduct teacher-made checklist and assessments to identify letters, numbers, and writing name.

Teacher 10: Pre-k should make a positive transition into kindergarten, based on my interpretation of High/Scope.

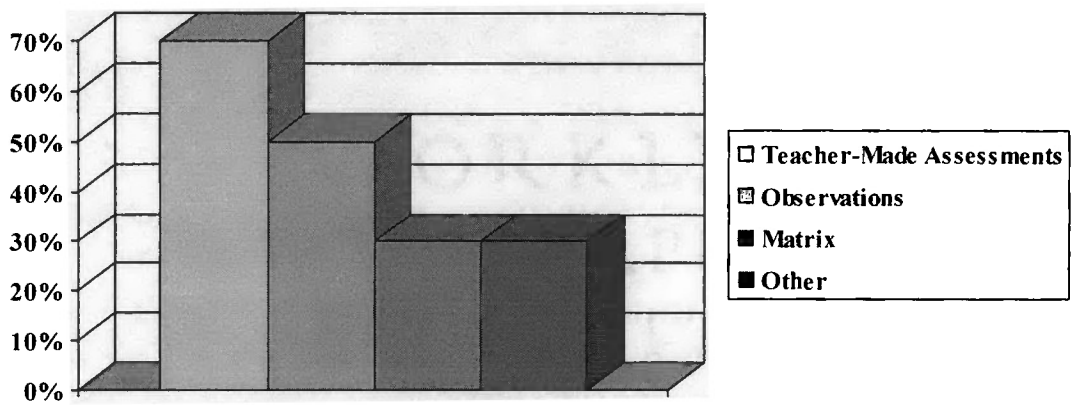


Figure 13. Important Criteria in Evaluating prekindergarten Student Performance

Seventy percent of the teachers interviewed consider their teacher-made assessments important when asked, "What criteria do you feel are important in evaluating prekindergarten student performance?" Fifty percent of the teachers believe observations are important. Thirty percent of the teachers mentioned matrix, and 20% feel the domains are important in evaluating prekindergarten student performance.

Twenty percent of the teachers interviewed believe the criteria for evaluating prekindergarten student performance should align with the kindergarten curriculum. Twenty percent of the teachers believe portfolios are important, while 10% said they do not like portfolio assessments. Twenty percent said the identification of letters, numbers, and name writing samples are important in evaluating prekindergarten student performance, while and additional 10% said they do not believe in testing prekindergarten students.

How do you monitor student progress?

Teacher 1: Teacher made rubrics, work sampling, and portfolios.

Teacher 2: County mandated assessments.

Teacher 3: Anecdotal notes, work-sampling, BLT pre-post test. Changing assessment from BLT to GGG was a set-back.

Teacher 4: Checklist, portfolios, pictures, notes, matrix, teacher made pre-mid-post test.

Teacher 5: Teacher made pre-mid-post test.

Teacher 6: Portfolios, work sampling, teacher made writing samples from kindergarten teaching experience.

Teacher 7: Anecdotal notes, matrix, portfolios, BLT, teacher made checklist.

Teacher 8: Anecdotal notes, matrix, work samples, check sheet, work sampling progress reports, teacher-made assessments. Also, making charts to satisfy the state assessment.

Teacher 9: Teacher made assessments, checklist & matrix. I am not in favor of county checklist because they are not parent friendly. Heavily rely on teacher-made assessments.

Teacher 10: Informal teacher-made assessments focusing on name, numbers, cutting, sight words, letter sounds, letter recognition, and phonemic skills. Work sampling, portfolios, IGDIS, K-PALS, K-SEALS.

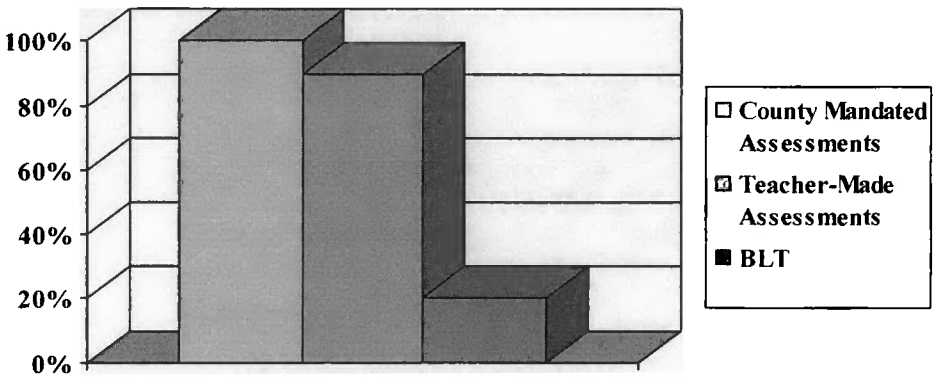


Figure 14. Student Progress Monitoring

One hundred percent of the teachers said they use the county mandated Work Sampling System and portfolios to monitor student progress. An overwhelmingly, 90% of the teachers admitted to using teacher made assessments.

Twenty percent of the teachers said they use the (BLT) Basic Literacy Test to monitor student progress, and ten percent of teachers commented on how they feel it was a set-back when the county changed assessment from the BLT to (GGG) Get It Got It Go.

What are your standards for student academic performance?

Teacher 1: Very high, whereby students are exposed to science, citizenship, listening skills, safety, tolerance, 911, empathy, character education, and life skills.

Teacher 2: My standards for academic performance include colors, numbers 1-20, knowing all the letters of the alphabet, knowing the letter sounds in their name, being able to write their first and last name. Learning to tie their shoes and knowing their telephone number.

Teacher 3: I have individual standards, but my standards for all students include recognizing colors, numbers 1-20, learning to tie their shoes and knowing their telephone number, knowing every letter of the alphabet, knowing sounds in their name, being able to write their first and last name.

Teacher 4: High standards that include recognizing colors, numbers 1-20, knowing every letter of the alphabet, knowing the letter sounds in their name, being able to write their first and last name, learning to tie their shoes and knowing their telephone number. They need to know how to hold a pencil and cut. They should be able to developmentally learn each skill. Their education should be spiraled. We should not go to the next skill until the previous skill was learned; 80% mastery on skills.

Teacher 5: Very high standards. Colors, numbers 1-20, knowing the alphabet, knowing the letter sounds in their name, being able to write their first and last name. Learning to tie their shoes and knowing their telephone number.

Teacher 6: High standards that let students work at their own pace. I do not have any pre-conceived ideas about what students do not know. As a result of the classroom having a large Hispanic population, in the beginning learning is more visual, before it becomes academic.

Teacher 7: High expectations, focusing on language & literacy, counting 1-20, writing 1-50, shapes, colors, letter sounds, writing name & knowing each letter, and some sight words.

Teacher 8: High standards, encouraging students to learn what they are capable of achieving. Goals include letter recognition, numbers 1-10, shapes, colors, letter sounds, 5 or more sight words, alliteration & rhyming.

Teacher 9: Goals include 26 uppercase letters, write first name, count 1-20, be socially able to handle sitting down for at least 20 minutes. Goals are beyond state and county standards.

Teacher 10: All children can learn, but all children really can't learn everything. All children have different standards.

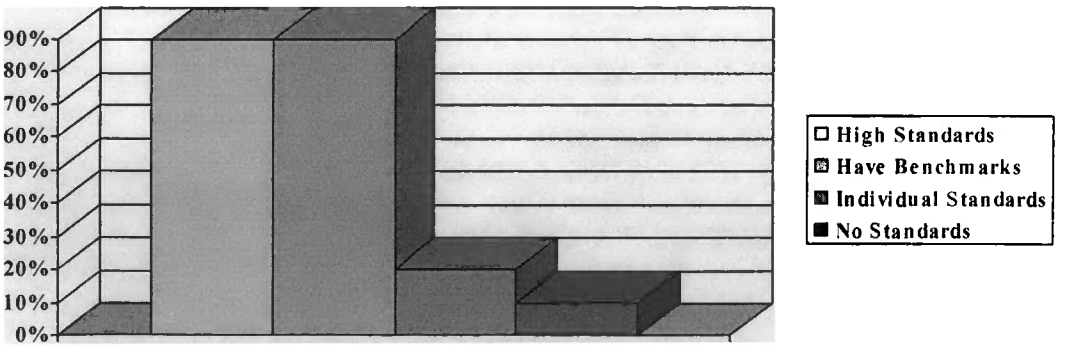


Figure 15. Standards for Student Academic Performance

Ninety percent of the teachers interviewed described themselves as having high-standards for student academic performance. Twenty percent said they had individual standards for individual students. Ten percent said they did not have any preconceived ideas about what students did not know and believed students should be able to work at their own pace. At the same time, another 10% said they knew their goals were beyond state and county standards.

Seventy percent of the teachers believe students should learn all 26 letters of the alphabet. Sixty percent said students should be able to recognize their colors and their shapes. Another 60% believe students should be able to write 1-20, while an added 10% believed students should be able to write 1-50.

Forty percent of the teachers interviewed said they expect children to write their first and last names, know the letter sounds in their name, know their telephone number, and be able to tie their own shoes before going to kindergarten.

Twenty percent of the teachers believe students should be able to sound letters and recognize some sight words. Ten percent of the teachers said they believe students should be able to write their first name, write 1-10, sound letters, use alliteration, and rhyming.

Additionally, 10% of the teachers interviewed think students should be exposed to science, listening skills, safety, character education, and life skills. Another 10% said PK students should simply be able to hold a pencil, cut, and have 80% mastery on skills before going to the next skill.

Prologue to Emergent Themes and Analysis

Without accurate analysis, relevant conclusions, and beneficial recommendations, raw data could prove to be insignificant. Therefore, conducting a close analysis of the raw data was quite essential to the benefit of this research.

The emergent themes were identified under each of the five dimensions for prekindergarten teacher responses. Several of the themes were common to all five dimensions: teacher perceptions of High/Scope, teacher training in High/Scope, teacher interpretation of High/Scope, teacher implementation of High/Scope, and teacher academic standards of students. The analyses for each group of themes revealed linkages across dimensions.

Emergent Themes Derived from Prekindergarten Teachers' Perceptions of High/Scope

In a close examination of the data, it is revealed that prekindergarten teachers have very similar perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum. Their support of the curriculum, their views of the impact training has on their perception of the curriculum, the curriculum's ability to effectively teach social skills, and a strong responsiveness that High/Scope does not provide kindergarten readiness skills, all seem to be relatively paramount.

Teachers' Support of the High/Scope Curriculum

Prekindergarten teachers feel they are "strongly" supportive of the High/Scope curriculum; however as evidenced in many of their responses they support only certain

components of the High/Scope curriculum; "Small group needs to be more formalized with teacher-directed activities," "You have to add to it," "Do not support free-choice," and "Have some reservations, like not being able to focus on a letter of the week."

A careful analysis of these statements might otherwise suggest that prekindergarten teachers' support of the curriculum seems to be strongly linked to the philosophy of the curriculum, rather than the curriculum's approach to teaching. For example, one teacher said:

> High/Scope provides order and routine. However, it is not necessarily a curriculum model to follow. Pre-k teachers need to have a curriculum they can follow and not feel limited to the fact that they can bring in other resources. I feel better when you have something to guide you through.

High/Scope Training Impacts Teacher's Perceptions

The data showed that these teachers are aware of the impact a curriculum has on the academic performance of students, as well as, the impact training has on the perceptions they have as teachers about a curriculum. In support of this analysis one teacher stated, "When you have good training you adapt it into your teaching." Another teacher said, "Your perception is different when you are trained by someone who believes in the program and has done it for many years."

Additionally, it was stated, "What you learned from your training and how you implement what you use impact the performance of PK students."

High/Scope Effectively Teaches Social Skills

A close look at the data revealed that the teachers' training experience impacted their perception a great deal and that their fundamental perception of High/Scope, as a result of their training, is that of a "social" nature. This analysis is supported by several of the teachers' replies. One teacher stated, "High/Scope does a good job of preparing children socially and provides language exposure. Another teacher stated, "High/Scope is a very effective program that teaches social, emotional, and life skills." One more teacher stated, "High/Scope teaches social skills, developmental skills, emotional skills, but not academics."

Additionally, it was stated, "High/Scope is ineffective academically based, but is effective for teaching social skills."

High/Scope Does Not Provide Kindergarten Readiness

The data revealed that prekindergarten teachers' perception of High/Scope further supports the analysis that prekindergarten teachers' believe High/Scope does not provide kindergarten readiness skills. Seven of the 10 teachers felt the High/Scope curriculum does not prepare prekindergarten students academically for kindergarten. One teacher straightforwardly expressed herself by saying, "If I followed the High/Scope curriculum completely my children would not be prepared by K standards for kindergarten." Another teacher stated, "High/Scope cannot stand alone for kindergarten preparation. We have them in PK, and some preparation needs to be going on to get them ready for kindergarten."

Additionally it was stated, "High/Scope is not effective by itself. It has to have a supplemental curriculum in order to be effective. Standing alone it is not effective. It has to have something to pull in the basic skills children need to go to kindergarten."

These teacher's responses necessitate research conducted by Graue (1990) who performed an ethnographic study to understand the meaning of school readiness within the context of social constructs. Graue discovered that each school community had distinct and relative interpretations of what readiness meant.

The study provided recommendations to refocus attention of parents, schools, and communities along with policy makers to support and to implement appropriate, comprehensive, and meaningful school readiness activities to prepare each child for kindergarten.

Emergent Themes Derived from PK Teachers' Perceptions of High/Scope Training

The data previously highlighted the degree to which prekindergarten teachers greed with the impact training had on their perception of the High/Scope curriculum. However, their perception of their High/Scope training experiences differed. The data revealed that prekindergarten teachers' outlook of their trainer and the follow-up support they received after training greatly contributes to student academic performance.

High/Scope Trainer Impacted Training

A close look at the data revealed that six out of ten prekindergarten teachers mentioned their trainer when discussing their High/Scope training experience. One teacher said, "Trainer was very supportive in transition from one school to another."

Another stated, "If you had a trainer who knew what they were talking about and who was effectively trained in High/Scope and redelivered it to you, than some of the components of High/Scope can be used to have a positive impact."

Additionally, it was revealed that teachers' training experience impacts their performance greatly. One teacher spoke very candidly about her trainer:

> My perception of the High/Scope curriculum increases my students' academic performance. My instructor had a different perception than mine. Because I was very disgusted with her perception, I don't think my kids had any academic success in my first year of implementing program. Once I read High/Scope I was better, because I understood High/Scope.

Follow-up Support was Significant

The data also revealed that prekindergarten teachers felt strongly about the follow-up support they received after training. For example, one teacher said, "Training was before school began, with follow-up support from instructor." Another stated, "I was able to contact trainers without intimidation." It was also mentioned that "training support was available via telephone."

Yet, a different response declared, "There was not any on-going communication after training for about nine months. Therefore I was not as confident.

Emergent Themes Derived from PK Teachers' Interpretation of High/Scope

In examining the data, it is revealed that prekindergarten teachers are relatively akin in their interpretation of the High/Scope curriculum. The data showed that

prekindergarten teachers' interpretations of the High/Scope curriculum are strongly linked to socialization and free choice.

Socialization is Fundamental

The data revealed that prekindergarten teachers in this study internalize High/Scope to suggest socialization among children. Four of the 10 teachers without hesitation plainly stated "socialization" when asked about their interpretation of the High/Scope approach. One teacher added, "Learn to play, play to learn." Another teacher said, "Socialization; choice; kids interacting with other kids. High/Scope teaches them to interact appropriately." One more teacher said, "a combination of social and developmental."

Free Choice is Strongly Emphasized

The data also revealed that prekindergarten teachers in this study internalize High/Scope to suggest free choice and children are given the opportunity to initiate their own activities. One teacher added, "Child-centered focusing on children's developmental needs." Another teacher painted a vivid depiction to support her interpretation:

> Children's interest! You can get a child interested in a piece of string, if you want them to be. The High/Scope approach is hands-on, and it is not saying that you must only play. It is not saying unstructured, and it does not mean chaos.
>
> Children learn through play. Play at school is not the same as play at home. Play is structured and facilitated with meaning behind the fun activities.

In accordance with research conducted by Marcon (1992), this teacher's statement is noteworthy. Marcon identified three preschool models operated in the Washington, DC, public schools; teacher-directed, child-initiated, and, "middle-of-the-road." The study concluded that children from child-initiated classes showed the greatest mastery of basic reading, language, and mathematics skills.

Emergent Themes Derived from PK Teachers' Implementation of High/Scope

The data evidenced that prekindergarten teachers are completely in unison with their method of implementing the High/Scope curriculum. A close look at the data revealed that prekindergarten teachers consider the implementation of the High/Scope daily schedule and the High/Scope plan-do-review sequence a major threshold for putting into practice the High/Scope curriculum. Eight out of 10 teachers consider their implementation of the High/Scope daily schedule adequate. Six out of 10 deem the implementation of the plan-do-review sequence sufficient.

Implementation of Daily Schedule is Fulfilled

While maintaining a daily routine and incorporating the plan-do-review process is at the core of the High/Scope curriculum, the fundamental premise of the High/Scope approach is that children are active learners who learn best from activities that they plan and carry out themselves.

According to Hohmann and Weikart (1995), active learning depends on positive adult interactions. Adults interact with children in ways that empower children to take

control of their own learning. Throughout the day, guided by an understanding of how prekindergarten children think and reason, adults practice positive interaction strategies

Implementation of the Plan-Do-Review Sequence is Fulfilled

Clearly, prekindergarten teachers' responses revealed that they consider their implementation of the High/Scope daily lesson plan and the High/Scope plan-do-review sequence vital to the implementation of the program. However, the data also revealed that prekindergarten teachers integrate supplementary components to the curriculum to ensure kindergarten readiness preparations, as evidenced in one teacher's statement:

> The main focus of High/Scope is table time, work-time, scheduling, set-up, lesson plans, and assessment. I incorporate High/Scope, Scholastics, phonics, and other teacher-directed activities covering all areas of academics. Children's interests are incorporated into teacher-directed activities.

Emergent Themes Derived from PK Teachers' Academic Standards of Students

The data revealed that prekindergarten teachers' academic standards of students are quite parallel to one another. In examining the data prekindergarten teachers have relatively high-expectations of their students, consider their teacher-made assessments indispensable, and kindergarten readiness preparations essential.

Teachers' Credit Themselves with Having High Expectations

Nine of the 10 teachers interviewed for this study considered themselves to have high-expectations of their students when asked what were their standards for student academic performance. One teacher responded by saying, "High standards, that let students work at their own pace." Another teacher stated, "High standards encouraging students to learn what they are capable of achieving." One more teacher stated, "All children can learn, but all children can't learn everything." Another teacher replied, "Goals are beyond state and county standards."

Teacher-Made Assessments Were Indispensable

Additionally, the data revealed that teacher-made assessments are widely generated by prekindergarten teachers. Seven of the 10 teachers depend on their teacher-made assessments to monitor student progress. One teacher said she "heavily relied" on teacher-made assessments to monitor student progress.

Kindergarten Readiness Preparation is Essential

Kindergarten readiness preparation is extremely important to these prekindergarten teachers. This analysis is supported by one prekindergarten teacher's comprehensive description of her benchmarks for student academic performance:

> High standards that include recognizing colors, numbers 1-20, knowing every letter of the alphabet, knowing the letter sounds in their name, being able to write their first and last name, learning to tie their shoes and knowing their telephone number. They need to know how to hold a pencil and cut. They should be able to developmentally learn each skill. Their

education should be spiraled. We should not go to the next skill until the previous skill was learned (80% mastery on skills).

Categorization and Coding of the Data

A teacher Interview Guide was developed in order to address the following research questions:

1. How do teachers believe their perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum impact the academic performance of prekindergarten students?
2. How does teacher training in High/Scope impact the academic performance of prekindergarten students?
3. How does teacher interpretation of the High/Scope approach impact the academic performance of prekindergarten students?
4. How does the implementation of the High/Scope curriculum impact the academic performance of prekindergarten students?
5. How do teacher academic standards of students impact the academic performance of prekindergarten students?

Fourteen interview questions were generated. The first three interview questions attended to the demographic data of teachers. The remaining eleven questions were developed in order to determine teacher perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students in this Georgia Public School System.

Five dimensions were identified while organizing the interview questions. The first group of the remaining eleven questions focused on teacher perceptions of

High/Scope. The second group of questions focused on teacher training in High/Scope. The third group focused on teacher interpretation of High/Scope. The fourth group focused on teacher implementation of High/Scope. The fifth and final group of questions focused on teacher academic standards of students.

Coding was completed by the description and the frequency of the responses made by each teacher in each of the five dimensions. Coding within and between dimensions was necessary to illustrate correlations across dimensions.

The dimensions are based upon expansive themes, specifically teacher perceptions of High/Scope, teacher training in High/Scope, teacher interpretation of High/Scope, teacher implementation of High/Scope, and teacher academic standards of students. Within each of these major dimensions, there are minor themes, which were presented.

Each of the 10 prekindergarten teachers was asked to respond to three questions under teacher perceptions of High/Scope; three questions under teacher training in High/Scope; one question for each, under teacher interpretation of High/Scope and teacher implementation of High/Scope; and three questions under teacher academic standards of students. Each interview question was open-ended. Therefore, teachers were encouraged to expound on their responses.

The teacher interview data presentation and analysis were categorized by the five large dimensions; the responses to the questions posed during the interview sessions, and an analysis of the teacher interview responses.

Teacher Observations

The third phase of the data collection process was teacher observations. Teacher observations completed this qualitative research study on prekindergarten teacher perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students. The observations were an essential part of this study and provided a detailed and objective look at prekindergarten teaching practices in this Georgia Public School System.

Teacher observations looked exclusively at teaching practices in each of the ten prekindergarten teacher classrooms interviewed, and more generally, documented the extent to which these High/Scope trained prekindergarten teachers were implementing the High/Scope curriculum.

The teacher observations were important for several reasons. First, they provided an opportunity to look across county settings at how teacher background, training, and teaching practices relate to one another. Second, they assessed whether the teaching philosophies portrayed in the interview dialogue synchronized with the teaching practices observed in the environments. Third, the observations served as a basis for examining teaching practices, as they relate to the High/Scope curriculum, and more specifically, the academic performance of prekindergarten students.

Prologue to Teacher Classroom Observations

It took one week to schedule and conduct teacher classroom observations in each of the 10 prekindergarten teachers' classrooms. Scheduling times to observe each

prekindergarten teacher's classroom was desirable among all teachers, as all ten teachers were asked and agreed in interviews to a follow-up classroom observation.

Observations occurred every day after school throughout the duration of one week. In order to provide convenience to teachers and expedite observations purposefully, an observation checklist was developed.

The presentation of the data is intended to provide an unambiguous illustration of the ten prekindergarten teachers' classrooms used for this study. First, the data in each category illustrating the ten prekindergarten teachers' learning environments is recounted. Next, the emergent themes, which derived from the observations, and data analysis are presented.

Teacher Classroom Observation Data

Physical Learning Environment

One hundred percent of the prekindergarten classrooms, observed for this study, were all arranged into clearly defined learning areas; 60% of the teachers had the High/Scope daily schedule posted providing the routine for the day; 100% of the prekindergarten classrooms evidenced the presentation of a theme; and 50% of the teacher's had environmental print displayed.

One hundred percent of the classrooms had children's art work on display; 100% of the work on display in the classrooms reflected children's unique interest; 70% of the teachers had chart stories displayed; and 100% of the classrooms were labeled with words identifying objects.

Curriculum and Instruction

One hundred percent of the prekindergarten classrooms had academic charts posted in their classrooms promoting kindergarten readiness skills; 100% of the teacher's were introducing a letter of the week; 60% of the classrooms had name writing samples displayed; 60% of the teacher's had students' cutting samples on display; 40% of the teacher's had dictations of student work; 40% of the children's work displayed reflected kindergarten readiness; 30% of the teacher's had a variety of children's writing samples displayed; and 30% of the prekindergarten classrooms had sight words posted.

Prologue to Emergent Themes and Analysis

The teacher classroom observations were very specific and purposeful. However, once again, without accurate analysis, relevancy, and practical recommendations, these observations could prove to be insignificant.

Conducting a close analysis of the data and identifying emergent themes was beneficial to the research of this study. The emergent themes were identified after careful examination of the observations. The analyses of the data revealed similarities among the different teacher's classrooms observed.

Emergent Themes Derived from Observations

Physical Learning Environments Reflects That Teachers are Complying with Curriculum

In a close examination of the data, it is revealed that prekindergarten teachers in this Georgia Public School System put great efforts into adhering to guidelines associated

with the High/Scope curriculum. Five of the eight physical learning environment indicators were observed in all classrooms.

First, the data revealed that 100 % of the classrooms were all arranged into clearly defined learning areas. Second, 100% of the prekindergarten classrooms evidenced the presentation of a theme. Third, 100% of the classrooms had children's art work on display. Fourth, 100% of the work on display in the classrooms reflected children's unique interest. Finally, 100% of the classrooms were labeled with words identifying objects

Curriculum and Instruction Indicators Were Not Evidenced

In a close examination of the data it is revealed that only two of the eight indicators in curriculum and instruction were observed in prekindergarten classrooms:

1. Of the prekindergarten classrooms, 100% had kindergarten readiness charts
2. One hundred percent of the teachers were introducing a letter of the week

The observation of these emergent themes support the analysis that prekindergarten teachers are placing great emphasis on the actual appearance of their physical learning environments, for the purpose of adhering to specific state, county, and curriculum guidelines, than in the appearance of their true teaching practices.

Additionally, teacher interviews revealed that 90% of the prekindergarten teachers feel they have "high expectations" for their prekindergarten students; 70% percent of the teachers said they rely on their teacher-made assessments to monitor student progress. Another 70% of the teachers said High/Scope is ineffective in preparing prekindergarten students for kindergarten.

Clearly, this group of prekindergarten teachers considers kindergarten readiness preparation essential. Therefore, it is apparent that prekindergarten teachers are putting great efforts into concealing the manner in which they are teaching and implementing the High/Scope curriculum.

Categorization and Coding of the Data

A teacher observation record sheet was developed in order to document instances of specificity. The teacher observation record sheet was developed by correlating key indicators from the Bright from the Start Program Quality Assessment, the High/Scope Preschool Key Experiences, the Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-k Program Content Standards, the Bright from the Start Work Sampling System Developmental Checklist, and the Bright from the Start Georgia Pre-K Progress Report, with significant responses from the interview sessions with prekindergarten teachers.

Coding was completed by the frequency of each phenomena derived from the recurrence in significant indicators. Two categories were identified while organizing the key indicators: (1) Physical learning environment and (2) Curriculum and instruction.

Thorough attention was given to the physical learning environment and to curriculum and instruction, with specific interest in the instructional materials and the display of student work.

The observation of the physical learning environment examined the High/Scope room arrangement, the High/Scope daily schedule, the presence of themes, environmental print, display of art work, display of children's unique efforts, the existence of chart stories, and the labeling of the classroom.

The observation of curriculum and instruction examined the existence of any academic charts, a letter of the week, the display of writing samples, dictation, sight words, names written, cutting samples, and any kindergarten readiness skills visible.

Summary

In order to determine prekindergarten teacher's perception of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students in this Georgia Public School System, this data presentation and analysis examined three data collection methods: documents, interviews with ten prekindergarten teachers, and follow-up classroom observations with the same ten prekindergarten teachers.

First, document analysis informed the interview protocol. Second, semi-structured interviews with ten prekindergarten teachers occurred. After the interviews, data was analyzed. Following the data analysis of interviews, careful consideration was given to the specifics for the observations. Next, observations in each of the ten prekindergarten teacher's classrooms occurred. Finally, observations were analyzed, whereby research findings could be discussed. Additionally, emergent themes were derived for each of the three methods of data collection as part of the data analysis.

All emergent themes linked with the five dimensions of this study: teacher perceptions of High/Scope, teacher training in High/Scope, teacher interpretation of High/Scope, teacher implementation of High/Scope, and teacher academic standards of students. Each theme was analyzed with consideration to its impact on teachers' perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum as it relates to prekindergarten academic performance.

It is hoped that the presentation of the raw data, in its entirety, will provide for the reader, a sense of correlation between documents examined and teaching practices revealed in the interview dialogue with the teaching practices observed in the learning environments, serving as vital information in establishing a curriculum that will impact prekindergarten student performance.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

The discussion of findings indicates what the research revealed about prekindergarten teachers' perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students in this Georgia Public School System. Ten prekindergarten teachers participated in this study. Participation was voluntary and anonymous.

The analysis of data resulted in an assessment of the extent to which prekindergarten teachers' perceptions, teacher training, teachers' interpretation of the curriculum, teachers' implementation of the curriculum, and teachers' academic standards of prekindergarten students correlated and differed on the specific impact the High/Scope curriculum has on the academic performance of prekindergarten students.

This chapter includes a discussion of findings, a listing of conclusions based on the findings, a listing of implications that can be drawn from the conclusions, and a listing of recommendations.

Findings

The findings addressed five essential research questions. The five research questions uncovered major themes that emerged from the five primary dimensions of this

study: teacher perceptions of High/Scope, teacher training in High/Scope, teacher interpretation of High/Scope, teacher implementation of High/Scope, and teacher academic standards of students

Teacher Perceptions of the High/Scope Curriculum

Prekindergarten teacher beliefs about their perception of the High/Scope curriculum varied. The emergent themes revealed that prekindergarten teachers feel they strongly support the High/Scope curriculum. As evidenced in the observations, their physical learning environments reflected that teachers are complying with the curriculum. However, the curriculum and instruction indicators teachers mentioned in interviews were not visible in the teacher classroom observations.

A good number of prekindergarten teachers felt their training and their perception of the High/Scope curriculum had a significant impact on students' academic performance. While others straightforwardly gave their opinion of the High/Scope curriculum stating, "I am in favor of High/Scope" and "I don't consider High/Scope a curriculum."

The emergent themes also revealed that prekindergarten teachers' feel High/Scope effectively teaches social skills, but does not provide kindergarten readiness as it was candidly stated, "If I followed High/Scope in its entirety, my students would not be prepared for kindergarten."

Teacher Training in High/Scope

The High/Scope Foundation offers a four-week extensive course to prekindergarten teachers. However, it was revealed that in the state of Georgia, through

the Department of Education, a two week comprehensive course was designed. The greater number of prekindergarten teachers that were trained in this Georgia Public School System had two-weeks of High/Scope training.

Most of the teachers spoke positively about their High/Scope training experience. The emergent themes revealed that prekindergarten teachers felt their High/Scope trainer impacted their training experience. However, prekindergarten teachers' perception of the impact training had on the academic performance of their students ranged. Some mentioned how training enhanced their teaching abilities, taught them hands-on activities, and how to plan activities "to foster specific skills." While others mentioned that they had to rely heavily on the training they received from other curriculum models. Sadly, one teacher said, "I don't think my kids had any academic success in my first year of implementing the program."

Most prekindergarten teachers' received follow-up support. The emergent themes revealed that prekindergarten teachers felt receiving follow-up support after training was significant. A very small percentage reflected on how overwhelming their training experience was and how it lacked on-going communication.

Teacher Interpretation of High/Scope

The majority of the prekindergarten teachers interviewed for this study seemed to view High/Scope from the same lens. They interpret it as, "not academically based or focused," but rather "socialization" and "free-choice." The emergent themes reveal that their outlook of High/Scope is that socialization is fundamental, and free choice is strongly emphasized.

Teacher Implementation of High/Scope

The emergent themes revealed that the vast majority of teachers feel they are implementing the High/Scope curriculum through the installation of the components in the High/Scope daily schedule and the plan-do- review sequence. However, the observations conducted in these classrooms connote that prekindergarten teachers' in this Georgia Public School System are placing great emphasis on the actual appearance of their physical learning environments, than in the appearance of instruction and curriculum.

The majority of prekindergarten teachers interviewed for this study listed more than a few specific benchmarks for student achievement. Therefore, it is apparent that the majority of prekindergarten teachers are putting great efforts into disguising the manner in which they are teaching and implementing the High/Scope curriculum. Further, they are strained into displaying environments that do not portray their actual teaching practices or beliefs as evidenced by the document analysis.

Teacher Standards for Student Academic Performance

The emergent themes revealed that a preponderance of prekindergarten teachers described themselves as having high-standards, when asked about their standards for student academic performance.

It was also revealed that prekindergarten teachers considered kindergarten readiness essential and therefore developed their own specific benchmarks and teacher-made assessments, despite the fact they had teaching guides to assist them with their

instruction and a total of four county and state assessments to monitor student progress that were already repetitive in nature and quite extensive.

These findings reveal that though prekindergarten teachers' ideologies seemed to differentiate, their goals for student performance are quite parallel and are beyond state and county standards.

Conclusions

The following conclusions that were derived from the findings of this study are presented as responses to the research questions and the analysis of data. These findings identified some very important conclusions surrounding the High/Scope curriculum with regard to teachers' perceptions, teacher training, teachers' interpretation of the curriculum, teacher's implementation of the curriculum, and teachers' academic standards of prekindergarten students.

The conclusions of this study suggest that the majority of prekindergarten teachers in this Georgia Public School System shared many of the same perceptions about the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students.

Prekindergarten teachers' perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum were significantly impacted by their High/Scope training experience. The findings of this study indicate that prekindergarten teachers who received one year of High/Scope training had different perceptions of High/Scope from those who received two weeks of training. Also, teachers who spoke very highly of their High/Scope trainer also mentioned the follow-up support they received after training.

Additionally, the teachers who received one year of High/Scope training considered their training experience to be very detailed and thorough. This can serve as an indicator for the manner in which training was implemented.

The research findings gave a broad understanding of how the prekindergarten teachers in this Georgia Public School System interpret the approach of the High/Scope curriculum. The findings suggest that prekindergarten teachers translate developmentally appropriate to simply connote, "socialization," "free-choice," "not academically based," and "working independently and cooperatively."

This is an indication that the framework of the High/Scope curriculum needs to be conveyed in-depth much further, throughout the district. According to the High/Scope Foundation, "The term curriculum leads most educators to expect a set of structured and sequenced tasks that provide the basic content for an educational program. Instead of such "packaged" activities, the High/Scope Curriculum offers a general *framework* that adults use to develop a specific program well suited to a particular group of children" (Brickman & Taylor, 1991).

Although the curriculum's guidelines are concrete and practical, they do not in themselves determine the day-to-day program: the necessary details of materials, scheduling, and daily activities are worked out, individually, by staff of each program. Since program staff take such an active role in planning their High/Scope educational program, it is vitally important that they understand the philosophy behind it (Brickman & Taylor, 1991).

Furthermore, the "overarching" goal of High/Scope is to establish a flexible, "open framework," operational model that supports developmentally appropriate education in diverse settings. The High/Scope Educational Foundation considers an educational experience, procedure, or method, whether adult or child-initiated, developmentally appropriate if it:

1. Exercises and challenges the learners' capacities as they emerge at a given developmental level.
2. Encourages and helps the learner to develop a unique pattern of interests, talents, and goals.
3. Presents learning experiences when learners are best able to master, generalize, and retain what they learn and can relate it to previous experiences and future expectations (Hohmann & Weikart, 1995).

More importantly, these findings indicate a relationship between the teachers' interpretation of the curriculum and the teachers' implementation of the curriculum. The teachers have interpreted their approach of the High/Scope curriculum to be, "socialization," "free-choice," "not academically based," and "working independently and cooperatively."

As a result, prekindergarten teachers in this study strongly believe the only manner in which they are following the curriculum is by complying with the implementation of the High/Scope daily schedule, plan-do review sequence, lesson plans, and room arrangement.

However, through my research of the High/Scope curriculum, I found that in reality, they are following it quite thoroughly without realizing it. The framework of High/Scope does not limit your teaching capabilities. Adults use children's ideas and interest as the source of inspiration, both in interacting with children individually and in creating lesson plans (Brickman & Taylor, 1991). Therefore, by using the framework of the key experiences to understand the developmental significance of what they observed about children's interests, ideas, and abilities, they insure that the resulting activities were developmentally appropriate and in tune with children's needs and interests (Brickman & Taylor, 1991).

Additionally, the findings of this research indicate that the teachers in this study set exceedingly high standards for their students, and that the academic performance of their students is of great importance to them. This was evidenced in the observations, evaluation criteria, academic standards, as well as the fact that the majority of them have developed their own supplemental assessments, checklist, and pre-test and post-test.

The most significant contribution of this research was using prekindergarten teachers to provide their perception on the impact the High/Scope curriculum has on the academic performance of prekindergarten students. When teachers were assured that their identity would remain anonymous, they responded openly and candidly about their position and opinions regarding the High/Scope curriculum, prekindergarten performance, and kindergarten readiness.

Implications

The findings of this research clearly imply that the prekindergarten teachers in this study are intrinsically motivated and dedicated to the academic performance of their students.

Prekindergarten teachers in this Georgia Public School System are certified with a minimum of four-years of college education in Early Childhood Education and hold valid teaching certificates, issued by the Professional Standards Commission of Georgia. These teachers were hired by the county and sign yearly contracts to comply with all policies, administrative rules, regulations, standards of ethical conduct, and curriculum standards, of the county, State Boards of Education, Professional Standards Commission, and the United States Department of Education.

In view of that, if prekindergarten teachers in this county continue to perceive that they have to "sneak to teach," in order to impact the academic performance of prekindergarten students, then questions of morale and integrity will arise for how prekindergarten teachers perceive themselves as part of the mission of the county to improve student academic achievement. Prekindergarten teacher's perception about the function of prekindergarten will progress towards affecting their professional effectiveness.

The following implications can be drawn from this study:

1. Information from this study serves as a curriculum focus for the leadership in the teaching and learning department.

2. Prekindergarten teachers' and prekindergarten district leaders' interpretation of the High/Scope curriculum differs from that of the High/Scope Foundation.
3. Prekindergarten teachers would like more regard from district leaders placed on kindergarten readiness skills and teaching practices.

Recommendations

Further research involving teacher perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students is needed, across the state of Georgia.

It is recommended that school administrators, project directors, PK lead teachers, assistant superintendents, and superintendents, use this data collection process as a model for collecting data relevant to teachers perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum, teacher training in the High/Scope curriculum, teachers' interpretation of the High/Scope curriculum, teacher's implementation of the High/Scope curriculum, and teacher's academic standards of prekindergarten students.

Based on the literature, research reviewed and data analyzed, the following recommendations are suggested for further consideration:

1. There is a need for further research to clarify and define kindergarten readiness.
2. District leaders, school administrators, prekindergarten teachers, and kindergarten teachers should collaborate to design prekindergarten standards that align with national, state, and county kindergarten standards.

3. Bright from the Start Department of Early Care and Learning, The High/Scope Educational Foundation, district leaders and the creators of the Work Sampling System should collaborate to maximize teaching practices, to impact the academic performance of prekindergarten students, and minimize the amount of paperwork to satisfy accountability rationale.
4. There is a need for district leaders to design a prekindergarten rubric assessment, with specific academic standards, aligned with kindergarten standards.
5. A collaborative effort to include: district leaders, the pre-k lead teacher, prekindergarten teachers, and the kindergarten coordinator, to examine and approve a prekindergarten curriculum that does not require extra expenditures on a supplemental curriculum, needs to occur.
6. School district training for prekindergarten teachers should give more attention to kindergarten readiness as it relates to developmentally appropriate practices.

Summary

In order to determine the findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for this study, the presentation of data and data analysis were examined carefully to uncover prekindergarten teachers' perception of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students' in this Georgia Public School System.

First, the findings, which were based on document analysis, the responses of ten prekindergarten teachers to five research questions, and ten classroom teacher observations, showed that there is a relationship between teachers' perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum, teacher training in High/Scope, teacher interpretation of High/Scope, teacher implementation of High/Scope, teacher academic standards of students, and prekindergarten academic performance.

The perceptions that prekindergarten teachers' had about the High/Scope curriculum were primarily based upon their training experience, academic standards, and teaching practices. Even though teachers' responses varied, the findings indicate that prekindergarten teachers in this Georgia Public School System felt strongly about kindergarten readiness preparation, as evidenced in the emergent themes.

Second, the conclusions which were based on the findings, emphasized the importance of understanding the impact the High/Scope curriculum has on the academic performance of prekindergarten students, by using the insight of prekindergarten teachers.

As a result of prekindergarten teachers' responding openly and honestly to questions relating to the High/Scope curriculum, the main purpose of this study which was to capture prekindergarten teachers' perception of High/Scope, as it relates to prekindergarten students academic performance, was accomplished.

Next, the three implications that were drawn from this research about the nature of the prekindergarten program in this district can serve as a curriculum focus for the county teaching and learning department; provide awareness that prekindergarten

teachers' and prekindergarten district leaders' interpretations of the High/Scope curriculum differ from that of the High/Scope Foundation; and communicate that prekindergarten teachers would like more regard placed on kindergarten readiness skills and teaching practices.

Finally, recommendations for further consideration were listed based on the findings, and conclusions, which can greatly benefit any prekindergarten program. school administrators, project directors, pre-k lead teachers, assistant superintendents, and superintendents are encouraged to employ this data collection process as a model for collecting data pertinent to teacher perceptions, teacher training, teacher interpretation, teacher implementation, and teacher academic standards of students.

Even more importantly, the board of education in this Georgia Public School System is encouraged to implement a policy that would require the inclusion of prekindergarten teachers' perceptions as criteria in their curriculum adoption process.

APPENDIX A

Prekindergarten Teacher Interview Questions

Dear Prekindergarten Teacher:

You are kindly asked to answer the following questions. The purpose of this interview is to determine prekindergarten teacher perceptions of the High/Scope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students. Your input regarding the effectiveness of the High/Scope curriculum is very important and your identity will remain anonymous.

1. How many years have you been teaching?
2. How many years have you been teaching prekindergarten?
3. What is the highest credential that you currently hold?
4. How do you believe your perception of the High/Scope curriculum impacts the academic performance of your students?
5. How does the High/Scope training you received impact the academic performance of your students?
6. How would you describe your High/Scope training experience?
7. How strongly do you support the philosophy of the High/Scope curriculum?
8. How do you interpret the High/Scope approach?
9. How do you implement the High/Scope approach?
10. What criteria do you feel are important in evaluating prekindergarten student performance?
11. How do you monitor student progress?
12. What are your standards for student academic performance?
13. How effective do you feel the High/Scope approach is, as it relates to preparing prekindergarten students for kindergarten?

Your time and cooperation are greatly appreciated. Thank you.

APPENDIX B

Permission to Interview

Researcher's Name: Lynette M. Johnson

Institution: Clark Atlanta University

Department: Educational Leadership

Dissertation Title: A Qualitative Study on Prekindergarten Teacher Perceptions of the High/Scope Curriculum and its Impact on the Academic Performance of Prekindergarten Students in a Georgia Public School System

I give Lynette M. Johnson permission to interview me. This interview will be used to conduct research for a dissertation at Clark Atlanta University. The purpose of this interview is to determine teacher perceptions of the High/cope curriculum and its impact on the academic performance of prekindergarten students in a Georgia public school system. My input regarding this study is very important and my identity will remain anonymous.

Interviewee Name: _____

Interviewee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

For further information, questions, or concerns you may contact:

Researcher's Name: Lynette M. Johnson	Dissertation Chair: Dr. Darrell Groves
Institution: Clark Atlanta University	Institution: Clark Atlanta University
Department: Educational Leadership	Department: Educational Leadership
Street Address: 223 James P. Brawley Drive	Street Address: 223 James P. Brawley Drive
City/State: Atlanta, Georgia	City/State: Atlanta, Georgia
Zip code: 30314	Zip Core: 30314
Phone:	Phone:
E-mail:	E-Mail:

APPENDIX C

Observation Data Sheet

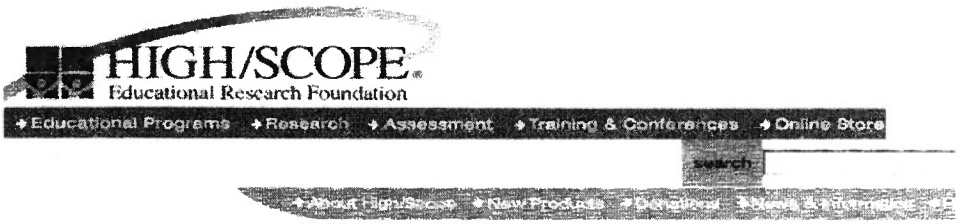
School _____

Teacher _____

		Comments
High /Scope Room Arrangement		
Academic Charts		
Environmental Print		
Letter of the Week		
Theme		
Display of Art Work		
Display of Writing Samples		
High/Scope Picture Schedule		
Dictation		
Cutting Samples		
Sight Words		
Names Written		
Children's Work Display is Unique		
Children's Work Display Reflects Kindergarten Readiness		
Chart Stories are on Display		
Classroom is Labeled		

APPENDIX D

High/Scope Educational Programs



Educational Programs: Curriculum Content

High/Scope Preschool Key Developmental Indicators (Key Experiences)

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High/Scope's **"key developmental indicators" (KDIs)** are early childhood milestones that guide teachers as they plan and assess learning experiences and interact with children to support learning. The term "key developmental indicators" replaces the term "key experiences." The 58 KDIs match the 58 preschool key experiences, but they have been reorganized under the following five curriculum content areas: approaches to learning; language, literacy, and communication; social and emotional development; physical development, health, and well-being; and arts and sciences. Arts and sciences are further divided into these subjects: mathematics, science and technology, social studies, and the arts. These content areas, based on the school readiness dimensions of the National Educational Goals Panel, align readily with national and state early learning standards.

To learn more about the reorganization of High/Scope's preschool content areas, you can link to a chart that shows the alignment of the High/Scope key developmental indicators and key experiences.

Approaches to Learning

- Making and expressing choices, plans, and decisions
- Solving problems encountered in play

Language, Literacy, and Communication

- Talking with others about personally meaningful experiences
- Describing objects, events, and relations
- Having fun with language: listening to stories and poems, making up stories and rhymes
- Writing in various ways: drawing, scribbling, letterlike forms, invented spelling, conventional forms
- Reading in various ways: reading storybooks, signs and symbols, one's own writing
- Dictating stories

Social and Emotional Development

- Taking care of one's own needs
- Expressing feelings in words
- Building relationships with children and adults
- Creating and experiencing collaborative play
- Dealing with social conflict

Physical Development, Health, and Well-Being

Appendix D (continued)

- Moving in nonlocomotor ways (anchored movement: bending, twisting, rocking, swinging one's arms
- Moving in locomotor ways (nonanchored movement: running, jumping, hopping, skipping, marching, climbing)
- Moving with objects
- Expressing creativity in movement
- Describing movement
- Acting upon movement directions
- Feeling and expressing steady beat
- Moving in sequences to a common beat

Arts and Sciences

Mathematics

Seriation

- Comparing attributes (longer/shorter, bigger/smaller)
- Arranging several things one after another in a series or pattern and describing the relationships(big/bigger/biggest, red/blue/red/blue)
- Fitting one ordered set of objects to another through trial and error (small cup—small saucer/medium cup—medium saucer/big cup—big saucer)

Number

- Comparing the numbers of things in two sets to determine "more," "fewer," "same number"
- Arranging two sets of objects in one-to-one correspondence
- Counting objects

Space

- Filling and emptying
- Fitting things together and taking them apart
- Changing the shape and arrangement of objects (wrapping, twisting, stretching, stacking, enclosing)
- Observing people, places, and things from different spatial viewpoints
- Experiencing and describing positions, directions, and distances in the play space, building, and neighborhood
- Interpreting spatial relations in drawings, pictures, and photographs

Science and Technology

Classification

- Recognizing objects by sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell
- Exploring and describing similarities, differences, and the attributes of things
- Distinguishing and describing shapes
- Sorting and matching
- Using and describing something in several ways
- Holding more than one attribute in mind at a time
- Distinguishing between "some" and "all"
- Describing characteristics something does not possess or what class it does not belong to

Appendix D (continued)

Time

- Starting and stopping an action on signal
- Experiencing and describing rates of movement
- Experiencing and comparing time intervals
- Anticipating, remembering, and describing sequences of events

Social Studies

- Participating in group routines
- Being sensitive to the feelings, interests, and needs of others

Visual Arts

- Relating models, pictures, and photographs to real places and things
- Making models out of clay, blocks, and other materials
- Drawing and painting

Dramatic Art

- Imitating actions and sounds
- Pretending and role playing

Music

- Moving to music
- Exploring and identifying sounds
- Exploring the singing voice
- Developing melody
- Singing songs
- Playing simple musical instruments

Click here to view High/Scope's infant-toddler key experiences.

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APPENDIX E

Georgia's Prekindergarten Program Quality Assessment: 2006 - 2007

GEORGIA'S PREKINDERGARTEN
PROGRAM QUALITY ASSESSMENT
2006 - 2007

Date _____ Time Arrived _____ Date _____ Time Arrived _____

Time Departed _____ Time Departed _____

Legal Name _____

d/b/a _____

Consultant Name _____

County _____ Curriculum _____

Project Director _____ Site Director _____

Person Interviewed _____ Resource Coordinator _____

Teacher	LT	AT	Start Date	End Date	New	Cont	Atten	Enroll

SUMMARY OF SCORES

Any item rated "Not Met" must be addressed in writing within 10 days.

A 1		A 6		A 11		B 1		B 6		B 11		C 5			
A 2		A 7		A 12		B 2		B 7		C 1		C 6			
A 3		A 8		A 13		B 3		B 8		C 2		D 1			
A 4		A 9		A 14		B 4		B 9		C 3		D 2			
A 5		A 10		A 15		B 5		B 10		C 4					

Comments

For any score of NM, you must send a written response within 10 days from the date of the visit.

Appendix E (continued)

Section A: Program Administration

Date	Date			
☐	☐	A 1.	The required staffing for the instructional day services is in accordance with current guidelines.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 2.	The Project Director has attended the required Bright from the Start sponsored training for the current school year.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 3.	The Site Director has **attended the required** Bright from the Start sponsored training for the current school year.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 4.	The Resource Coordinator, if applicable, has attended the required Bright from the Start training for the current school year.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 5.	The Lead Teacher has attended the required Bright from the Start sponsored yearly training as designated by the guidelines.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 6.	The Assistant Teacher has attended the required Bright from the Start sponsored yearly training as designated by the guidelines.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 7.	**Eligibility** documentation for all children is on file in accordance with current guidelines.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 8.	Immunization forms (3231) are current and on file at the site within 30 calendar days of the start of the child's Pre-K program.	Due date
☐	☐	A 9.	Eye, ear, and dental forms (3300) are on file at the site within 90 calendar days of the start of child's Pre-K program.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 10.	Documentation is on site to verify Category 1 eligibility.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 11.	The attendance rosters are maintained with times noted when children arrive late or leave before the end of the instructional day.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 12.	Absenteeism or tardiness issues are handled in accordance with current guidelines.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 13.	The Pre-K funded eight-hour day for teachers includes 1.5 hours of teacher planning and/or other Pre-K related activities.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 14.	The procedures for disenrollment or suspension of a child from the Pre-K program have been followed as designated by the current guidelines.	Due Date
☐	☐	A 15.	An orientation is provided for Pre-K staff on program guidelines and instructional expectations.	Due Date

Appendix E (continued)

Section B: Physical Learning Environment

Date Date

B 1. The classroom is arranged into clearly defined learning areas that enhance children's growth and development. Due Date

Partially Meets	Meets	Exceeds
❑ The room arrangement supports an appropriate instructional environment.	❑ Learning areas are changed to reflect current topics and interests.	❑ Boundaries are established for each learning area
❑ Materials are accessible to the children.	❑ A protected space is accessible for one or two children to work or play without interruptions.	❑ More than one protected space is accessible in the classroom
❑ Materials and furniture are in good repair.	❑ Centers are arranged for independent use by the children.	
❑ Learning areas are clean and well lit.		
❑ Quiet and noisy areas are separated.		
❑ The classroom is organized and uncluttered.		

B 2. The classroom display reflects the children's interests and activities. Due Date

Partially Meets	Meets	Exceeds
❑ Children's creative efforts are displayed in the classroom.	❑ The majority of the display in the classroom reflects children's unique and individual expression.	❑ The classroom display reflects the current topics and children's interests.
❑ Children's creative efforts are displayed at varying levels.	❑ The children's creative efforts are displayed throughout the classroom.	❑ Pictures of the children and/or families are displayed in the classroom.
❑ Displayed work includes a variety of media.	❑ The items displayed in the classroom are current and are changed regularly.	❑ Children select the location to display their work.
		❑ The classroom display includes charts and/or stories of current activities.

B 3. The Language and Literacy area is equipped to provide many opportunities for children to explore, manipulate, investigate and discover. Due Date

Partially Meets	Meets	Exceeds
❑ The reading area is cozy and inviting.	❑ A listening area with books and corresponding tapes is accessible.	❑ Books made by individuals and groups of children in the class are included in the reading area.
❑ Children's appropriate literature is accessible.	❑ The flannel board and flannel board stories are accessible.	❑ Language and literacy props related to the current story or topic of study are accessible.
❑ At least one book per child is displayed in an orderly manner.	❑ A writing area is accessible with a variety of materials that address differing developmental levels.	❑ Additional language props are available.
❑ Additional books are available for rotation.	❑ Various literature types are accessible.	❑ Materials are accessible to enhance children's understanding of the alphabetic principle.
❑ Language and literacy props are in good repair.	❑ Various cultures, abilities, ages and races are represented in the accessible reading materials.	❑ Language and literacy props are rotated.
	❑ Books related to the current topics are accessible in order to expand children's interests and vocabulary.	❑ Books are available for children to checkout, take home and return.
	❑ Books are rotated to maintain children's interest.	

Appendix E (continued)

B 4. The Math/Manipulative area is equipped to provide many opportunities for children to explore, manipulate, investigate and discover. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ Various puzzles are accessible that address differing development levels.
- ❑ Manipulatives include materials for counting, sorting, recognizing shapes, classification and hand/eye coordination.
- ❑ Enough manipulatives are accessible for small group activities.
- ❑ Materials are complete with all necessary components.
- ❑ Materials are organized, uncluttered and in good condition.

Meets
- ❑ Materials are stored in clear containers or containers with labels.
- ❑ Real/found materials are included in the area.
- ❑ Materials are accessible to provide opportunities to measure length, weight and time.

Exceeds
- ❑ Math activities are included as a part of the daily routine.
- ❑ Activities to teach time concepts are included as part of the daily routine.
- ❑ Materials are rotated to maintain children's interest.
- ❑ Reading and writing materials are included in the area.
- ❑ Informational books that include mathematical concepts, such as counting, are read at group time.

B 5. The Dramatic Play area is equipped to provide many opportunities for children to explore, manipulate, investigate and discover. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ The area is large enough to accommodate several children.
- ❑ Materials are organized for easy accessibility and clean-up.
- ❑ Various props, including dolls and dress-up clothes, are accessible.
- ❑ A mirror is accessible to the children.

Meets
- ❑ Dolls representing various populations of the world are accessible.
- ❑ Doll accessories are accessible.
- ❑ An adequate supply of dress–up clothes that includes clothing worn by both men and women is accessible.
- ❑ A full-length mirror is included in the area.
- ❑ Real and found materials are included in the learning area.
- ❑ Props and accessories for at least two different dramatic play themes are accessible.

Exceeds
- ❑ Props are rotated to maintain children's interest.
- ❑ Multiple settings are provided in the dramatic play area throughout the year.
- ❑ Environmental print is included in the area.
- ❑ Reading and writing materials are included in the area.

B 6. The Art area is equipped to provide many opportunities for children to explore, manipulate, investigate and discover. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ Basic items such as crayons, markers, paper, scissors and glue are accessible.
- ❑ Paint is accessible.
- ❑ Various items for collage making are accessible.
- ❑ The center area is organized and orderly.

Meets
- ❑ Materials for three-dimensional creations are accessible.
- ❑ Various types of paper are accessible.
- ❑ The art easel is supplied with paint and paper and accessible daily.
- ❑ Smocks or cover-ups are accessible.
- ❑ A table is located in the art area.

Exceeds
- ❑ There is a place for children's work to dry.
- ❑ A source of water is nearby.
- ❑ Reading materials are included in the area.

B 7. The Block area is equipped to provide many opportunities for children to explore, manipulate, investigate, and discover. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ The area is large enough to accommodate several children.
- ❑ An adequate number of unit blocks is accessible for several children.
- ❑ An adequate number of hollow blocks is accessible for several children.
- ❑ Blocks are organized and sorted according to type.

Meets
- ❑ Block props and accessories are included in the block area.
- ❑ The block area is located away from traffic patterns.
- ❑ Labels are used to aid in organization and to support clean up efforts.
- ❑ Real/found materials are included in the learning area.

Exceeds
- ❑ In addition to unit and hollow blocks, other types of blocks are accessible for use.
- ❑ Block props and accessories are rotated to maintain children's interests.
- ❑ Reading and writing materials are included in the area.

Appendix E (continued)

B 8. Science materials are provided for children to explore, manipulate, investigate and discover. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ An adequate supply of basic materials for science exploration is accessible.
- ❑ A sensory table/tub is supplied, open and accessible to the children.
- ❑ Science materials are organized and uncluttered.

Meets
- ❑ Collections of natural items are accessible.
- ❑ Nature/science games and/or toys are accessible.
- ❑ Something living for children to care for and observe is included in the classroom.
- ❑ Reading and writing materials are included with the science materials.

Exceeds
- ❑ Various resources are used to add information and extend children's learning experiences.
- ❑ Materials in the sensory table/tub are changed frequently to provide a variety of textures and experiences.
- ❑ Informational books that focus on scientific concepts are included in instructional activities.
- ❑ Science materials are rotated to maintain children's interest.

B 9. Music and movement materials are provided for children's use. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ Teachers provide daily opportunities for the children to participate in music and movement.
- ❑ Musical instruments are available for all of the children.
- ❑ There is a cassette player, record player or compact disc player in the classroom.
- ❑ Cassettes, records or compact discs are available.

Meets
- ❑ Various types of music are available.
- ❑ Music is played at various times of the day.
- ❑ Teachers provide multiple opportunities for children to participate in music and movement activities daily.
- ❑ Various musical instruments are accessible.
- ❑ Volume of background music is kept low.
- ❑ Instruments reflect various cultures.
- ❑ Music props are available.

Exceeds
- ❑ Materials are available for children to make their own instruments.
- ❑ Activities using props for music and movement are incorporated into lessons.
- ❑ Activities are planned to familiarize children with music of various cultures.

B10. Materials, equipment and activities are provided to promote physical development. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ The equipment and play area are in good repair and free of safety hazards.
- ❑ Adequate resilient surfacing is present.
- ❑ The equipment is appropriately sized for four-year-old children.
- ❑ Accommodations are made for children with special needs.

Meets
- ❑ Mobile equipment is accessible for daily use.
- ❑ Stationary equipment to promote gross motor skills is used daily.
- ❑ Children have a choice of activities during outside time.

Exceeds
- ❑ The outdoor environment is enhanced with learning center materials.
- ❑ The outdoor environment allows for a variety of settings.
- ❑ Reading and writing materials are provided in the outdoor area.

B 11. Health and safety issues are addressed. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ The classroom environment is free from safety hazards.
- ❑ Toilets and sinks are adequately supplied.
- ❑ Children are adequately supervised throughout the instructional day to ensure their health and safety.
- ❑ When pets are present in the classroom, proper sanitation and care procedures are followed.
- ❑ Adults and children wash hands at appropriate times.
- ❑ Sanitary conditions are maintained when food is served.

Meets
- ❑ Teachers model appropriate health and hygiene practices.
- ❑ Health related books, games or displays are available.
- ❑ Children are guided toward managing health practices independently.

Exceeds
- ❑ Health related activities are incorporated into the instructional program.
- ❑ Community resources are used to reinforce health and safety concepts.

Appendix E (continued)

Section C: Instruction and Curriculum

Date Date

___ ___

C 1. The daily routine is appropriate for the ages and abilities of the children. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ The hours for instructional day services are in accordance with the current guidelines.
- ❑ The written daily schedule is posted and implemented.
- ❑ Group opening and closing activities are included on the daily schedule.
- ❑ Rest time does not exceed 60 minutes.
- ❑ Quiet activities are provided in a non-punitive manner for children who are non-sleepers.
- ❑ The schedule includes a balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities.
- ❑ Children are given adequate time to develop their play in self-selected learning areas.

Meets
- ❑ Opening and closing activities are implemented.
- ❑ Smooth and orderly transitions are planned and implemented.
- ❑ Wait time between activities is kept to a minimum.
- ❑ Plans/routines/schedules allow for flexibility based on the needs and interests of the children.
- ❑ Instructional activities are included after rest time.

Exceeds
- ❑ A schedule for children (readers and non-readers) is posted at children's eye level in the classroom and is used to help children understand the daily routine.
- ❑ The schedule is revised as children mature and develop.

C 2. The program enhances children's feelings of comfort, security and self-esteem through positive interactions. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ Each adult is actively involved with the children.
- ❑ Staff talks and listens to individual children with attention and respect throughout the day.
- ❑ Teachers respond to children's requests and questions.
- ❑ All children are treated with respect, dignity and acceptance.

Meets
- ❑ Meaningful/informal conversations between staff and children occur.
- ❑ Positive interactions occur at the children's eye level.
- ❑ Children's interactions are positive in nature.
- ❑ Staff participates in children's play to turn play activities into meaningful learning opportunities.

Exceeds
- ❑ Activities are planned to promote group cooperation.
- ❑ Staff sits with children during meals/snacks and facilitates a positive social experience.

C 3. Classroom management techniques are employed which foster self-control, responsibility and respect for self, others and property. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ Age appropriate/non-punitive classroom management techniques are used that guide and redirect children.
- ❑ Teachers encourage appropriate behavior.
- ❑ The teachers' expectations for appropriate classroom behavior reflect the age and developmental level of the children.
- ❑ The learning environment is set up to prevent conflicts and promote positive interactions.
- ❑ Corporal punishment is not used.

Meets
- ❑ Age appropriate classroom rules are developed and kept to a minimum.
- ❑ Staff actively involves children in problem solving techniques.
- ❑ Logical and natural consequences are used when possible.
- ❑ A private guidance system is planned and implemented for individual children, as needed.
- ❑ Staff consults outside professional resources and makes referrals, as needed.

Exceeds
- ❑ Various activities are planned to help children develop social skills.
- ❑ Teachers model and encourage children to focus on the positive behavior of others.
- ❑ Children are involved in developing classroom rules.

Appendix E (continued)

☐ ☐ **C 4. The environment and instruction promote language development.** Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ Teachers provide **various** daily opportunities for the children to develop phonological awareness
- ❑ Teachers provide a planned opportunity for the children to participate in reading and discussing children's literature daily
- ❑ Language development is encouraged through interactions with adults and peers
- ❑ Adults support language development for children with special needs
- ❑ A plan has been developed to meet the needs of non-English speaking students

Meets
- ❑ The environment is language and literacy focused and print rich
- ❑ Adults ask open-ended questions and provide time for children to reflect and respond
- ❑ Teachers provide multiple opportunities for the children to participate in reading and discussing children's literature daily
- ❑ Teachers involve children in informal reading experiences
- ❑ Teachers read to children in planned small groups at least weekly
- ❑ The environment includes children's dictation

Exceeds
- ❑ The connection between spoken communication and written language is demonstrated in multiple ways
- ❑ Displayed print is used as an opportunity for teaching skills and concepts
- ❑ Children are exposed to other languages and/or other forms of communication
- ❑ Large group literacy activities such as shared reading using big books, flannel board stories, or acting-out familiar stories are implemented at least weekly

☐ ☐ **C 5. The program is planned and implemented to address sequentially all phases of learning.** Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ Current lesson plans are on site and are implemented
- ❑ Religious instruction, activities, and materials are not used during the instructional day
- ❑ Lesson plans reflect appropriate instructional practices and activities

Meets
- ❑ Instruction is based on content standards in each of the following domains: language/literacy, math, science, social studies, creativity, physical development and social/emotional concepts
- ❑ Instruction is responsive to individual differences
- ❑ The contracted curriculum is implemented
- ❑ Instructional activities are planned to build upon children's participation in field trips or other special experiences

Exceeds
- ❑ Lesson plans are individualized
- ❑ Observations of children are used in planning instruction
- ❑ Children have opportunities to extend learning activities/projects over a period of time
- ❑ Interests of the children are incorporated into the instructional program

☐ ☐ **C 6. Assessment for all children is on going and reflects appropriate practices.** Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ The child assessment procedures reflect appropriate practices for children
- ❑ The assessment tool is supported by anecdotal observations and portfolio artifacts
- ❑ The assessment tool and supporting documentation are maintained on-site for each child

Meets
- ❑ Observations are recorded regularly
- ❑ Information noted in observations documents children's growth and development in all domains
- ❑ Portfolio artifacts document children's growth and development
- ❑ Observations are systematically organized by children's names and domain

Exceeds
- ❑ Assessment includes information from multiple sources such as parents and additional resource personnel
- ❑ Teachers provide parents individualized information on children's progress throughout the year
- ❑ Portfolios include a variety of media

Appendix E (continued)

Date Date

___ ___

Section D: Transition and Family Involvement

D 1. Various activities are planned to involve families in the educational program. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ A documented Pre-K parent orientation has been provided within 20 days of commencement of services
- ❑ Family Handbooks and other documentation such as school calendar and/or schedule of fees are distributed to families
- ❑ Documented parent/teacher conferences are offered at least twice during the school year
- ❑ The Governor's books for the children are distributed to families.

Meets
- ❑ Opportunities are provided for families to participate in the children's educational experience.
- ❑ Families are notified of classroom activities through regular written communication such as newsletters or Daily News activities.

Exceeds
- ❑ The program provides families with hands on activities for home use
- ❑ Family literacy packs are used to enhance literacy opportunities
- ❑ A lending library has been established with a variety of learning materials for families.

D 2. Various kindergarten readiness activities are planned to ease the transition to kindergarten for children and their families. Due Date

Partially Meets
- ❑ Families are assisted in obtaining the required kindergarten documentation
- ❑ A plan has been developed for an orientation and distribution of the "Ready for School" Kits

Meets
- ❑ An effort is made for children to meet kindergarten staff.
- ❑ Transition procedures are discussed with parents during a meeting or through individual contacts
- ❑ Classroom activities are planned to familiarize the children with kindergarten routines.

Exceeds
- ❑ Opportunities are provided for Pre-K children to participate in kindergarten functions such as kindergarten field trips, school fairs/carnivals, picnics, or special assemblies.
- ❑ Plans are made to contact former students during the beginning of their kindergarten year

Project Director/Site Director/Principal Signature Visit 1 Date

Project Director/Site Director/Principal Signature Visit 2 Date

Consultant Contact Information:

Appendix E (continued)

COMMENTS
Fall Observation Period

Winter Observation Period

Spring Observation Period

Appendix E (continued)

I Personal and Social Development

A Self concept

	F	W	S
1 Demonstrates self-confidence. (p. 1)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
2 Shows some self-direction. (p. 1)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐

B Self control

	F	W	S
1 Follows simple classroom rules and routines. (p. 1)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
2 Uses classroom materials carefully. (p. 2)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
3 Manages transitions. (p. 2)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐

C Approaches to learning

	F	W	S
1 Shows eagerness and curiosity as a learner. (p. 2)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
2 Attends to tasks and seeks help when encountering a problem. (p. 2)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
3 Approaches tasks with flexibility and inventiveness. (p. 3)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐

D Interaction with others

	F	W	S
1 Interacts easily with one or more children. (p. 3)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
2 Interacts easily with familiar adults. (p. 3)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
3 Participates in the group life of the class. (p. 3)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
4 Shows empathy and caring for others. (p. 4)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐

E Social problem-solving

	F	W	S
1 Seeks adult help when needed to resolve conflicts. (p. 4)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐

II Language and Literacy

A Listening

	F	W	S
1 Gains meaning by listening. (p. 5)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
2 Follows two- or three-step directions. (p. 5)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
3 Demonstrates phonological awareness. (p. 5)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐

B Speaking

	F	W	S
1 Speaks clearly enough to be understood without contextual clues. (p. 6)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
2 Uses expanded vocabulary and language for a variety of purposes. (p. 6)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐

C Reading

	F	W	S
1 Shows appreciation for books and reading. (p. 6)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
2 Shows beginning understanding of concepts about print. (p. 7)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
3 Begins to develop knowledge about letters. (p. 7)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
4 Comprehends and responds to stories read aloud. (p. 7)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐

D Writing

	F	W	S
1 Represents ideas and stories through pictures, dictation, and play. (p. 8)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
2 Uses letter-like shapes, symbols, and letters to convey meaning. (p. 8)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
3 Understands purposes for writing. (p. 8)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐

III Mathematical Thinking

A Mathematical processes

	F	W	S
1 Begins to use simple strategies to solve mathematical problems. (p. 11)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐

B Number and operations

	F	W	S
1 Shows beginning understanding of number and quantity. (p. 11)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐

C Patterns, relationships, and functions

	F	W	S
1 Sorts objects into subgroups that vary by one or two attributes. (p. 11)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐
2 Recognizes simple patterns and duplicates them. (p. 12)	Not Yet ☐	☐	☐
	In Process ☐	☐	☐
	Proficient ☐	☐	☐

Not Yet—child cannot demonstrate indicator
In Process—child demonstrates indicator intermittently
Proficient—child can reliably demonstrate indicator

F=FALL
W=WINTER
S=SPRING

The Work Sampling System Preschool–1 Developmental Guidelines contains full descriptions of each performance indicator. (Number in parentheses indicates the page in the Guidelines where the indicator is described.)

Appendix E (continued)

D Geometry and spatial relations F W S
1 Begins to recognize and describe the attributes of shapes. (p. 12)
2 Shows understanding of and uses several positional words. (p. 12)

E Measurement F W S
1 Orders, compares, and describes objects according to a single attribute. (p. 13)
2 Participates in measuring activities. (p. 13)

IV Scientific Thinking

A Inquiry F W S
1 Asks questions and uses senses to observe and explore materials and natural phenomena. (p. 15)
2 Uses simple tools and equipment for investigation. (p. 15)
3 Makes comparisons among objects. (p. 16)

V Social Studies

A People, past and present F W S
1 Identifies similarities and differences in personal and family characteristics. (p. 17)

B Human interdependence F W S
1 Begins to understand family needs, roles, and relationships. (p. 17)
2 Describes some people's jobs and what is required to perform them. (p. 17)
3 Begins to be aware of technology and how it affects life. (p. 18)

C Citizenship and government F W S
1 Demonstrates awareness of rules. (p. 18)
2 Shows awareness of what it means to be a leader. (p. 18)

D People and where they live F W S
1 Describes the location of things in the environment. (p. 19)
2 Shows awareness of the environment. (p. 19)

VI The Arts

A Expression and representation F W S
1 Participates in group music experiences. (p. 21)
2 Participates in creative movement, dance, and drama. (p. 21)
3 Uses a variety of art materials for tactile experience and exploration. (p. 22)

B Understanding and appreciation F W S
1 Responds to artistic creations or events. (p. 22)

VII Physical Development and Health

A Gross motor development F W S
1 Moves with balance and control. (p. 23)
2 Coordinates movements to perform simple tasks. (p. 23)

B Fine motor development F W S
1 Uses strength and control to perform simple tasks. (p. 23)
2 Uses eye-hand coordination to perform tasks. (p. 24)
3 Shows beginning control of writing, drawing, and art tools. (p. 24)

C Personal health and safety F W S
1 Performs some self-care tasks independently. (p. 24)
2 Follows basic health and safety rules. (p. 25)

4th Edition P4

CHILD
DATE OF BIRTH
TEACHER
SCHOOL
FEMALE MALE

Observation Periods
FALL
WINTER
SPRING

The Work Sampling System®
Preschool 4
Developmental Checklist

Appendix E (continued)

About the Developmental Checklist

This Checklist assists teachers in observing, recording, and evaluating an individual child's skills, knowledge, behaviors, and accomplishments. It is intended to help teachers monitor what children know and can do, and to assist teachers in planning learning experiences throughout the year. The behaviors and skills described here are those considered to be developmentally appropriate for most children in this grade.

The Checklist reflects common experiences and expectations in classrooms that are structured around activities appropriate for most children of this age. Teachers should be able to complete the Checklist without actually testing their children, although some items may require teachers to set up specific opportunities or activities that enable their students to demonstrate specific skills. We recommend that these activities be integrated into typical classroom routines as much as possible.

The Checklist is completed three times per year, each time following a period of ongoing observation that corresponds to one of the Work Sampling System's three collection periods. The process of observing and rating the indicators on the Checklist provides information which teachers may use to assist in their planning. In the fall, after becoming acquainted with the child, the teacher can use observations and Checklist ratings to begin to plan activities and experiences to promote growth and development of skills. In the winter, the teacher can assess the child's growth and development and make additional modifications to existing curriculum plans. In the spring, the Checklist provides a detailed summary of the child's development and accomplishments over the course of the year.

Developmental Guidelines

The Checklist presents each specific skill, behavior, or accomplishment in the form of a one-sentence performance indicator. The Checklist for each age or grade level is accompanied by a set of detailed Developmental Guidelines that explain and elaborate on each performance indicator by providing a rationale and examples. The rationale provides a context that explains the meaning and importance of the indicator and briefly outlines reasonable expectations for children of this age. The examples show several ways children might demonstrate the skill or accomplishment represented by the indicator. Since teachers might otherwise interpret the same indicator in different ways, the Guidelines promote consistency of interpretation and evaluation across children, teachers, and schools. The Guidelines incorporate information from a wide array of resources, including local, state, and national standards for curriculum development. The Guidelines are essential for correct and effective use of the Checklist. Each performance indicator on the Checklist includes a reference to the page in the grade-level Guidelines where the indicator is described.

Checklist Ratings

These categories reflect the degree to which children have acquired the skill, behavior, and/or demonstrated the accomplishments required by each of the performance indicators listed in the Checklist and described in the Guidelines. Three types of ratings are possible:

Not Yet — indicates that this child cannot perform this indicator, i.e., that this performance indicator represents a skill, an area of knowledge,or a specific set of behaviors or accomplishments that the child has not acquired.

In Process — implies that the skills, knowledge, behaviors, or accomplishments represented by this indicator are intermittent or emergent, and are not demonstrated reliably or consistently.

Proficient — means that this child can reliably demonstrate the skills, knowledge, behaviors, or accomplishments represented by this performance indicator. Although the child may have advanced beyond the level of difficulty of the indicator, and may no longer participate in activities that are described by the indicator, if the teacher has observed the child perform such tasks, and if the tasks are clearly within the child's range or repertoire, the indicator should be marked "Proficient."

If a particular indicator covers an area of the curriculum that is not included in this classroom, or that has not yet been introduced to this student, write "NA" for "Not Applicable." Space is also available on the front of the Checklist for brief comments.

For more information, see the Work Sampling System Teacher's Manual.

The Work Sampling System®

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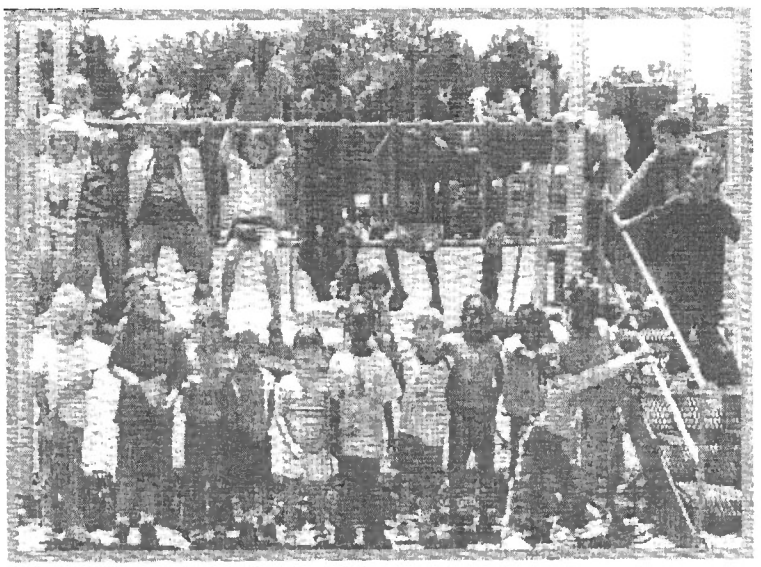
APPENDIX F

Georgia's Pre-K Program Content Standards

Georgia's Pre-K Program

Content Standards

Revised July 2006



BRIGHT from the START

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Appendix F (continued)

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

Pre-K children develop language and literacy through interactions with adults and other children, engagement with materials, and instructional experiences. In providing the foundation for later reading, Pre-K children should be exposed to activities that will develop the ability to listen for comprehension and to discriminate sounds in language. Children develop an awareness of print and books through a variety of activities and interactions. They begin writing using pictures, symbols and letters. Later reading success is directly correlated to the interaction of children with books through listening and responding to books read aloud and engaging in activities related to the stories.

Strategies to support inclusive learning environments:

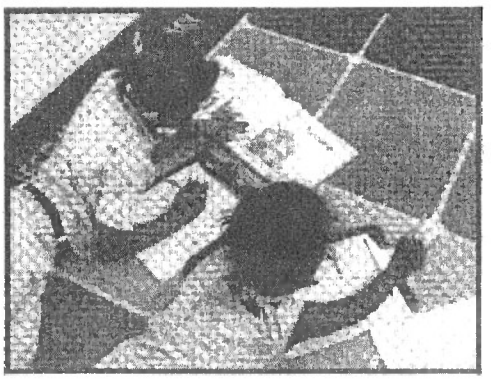
- Use various modes of communication with children (pictures, sign language, Braille, Story Boards, augmentative devices, Closed Captioning with TV/Movie activities, and Interpreter)
- Prompt questions with WH words (who, what, and where)
- Make eye contact with student
- Get a child's attention with auditory cuing (calling out their name, having a special word or phrase)
- Use books on tape and earphones/verbal output device
- Use a cued or key word to facilitate communication
- Use a favorite toy, activity or person to encourage communication
- Ask frequent questions throughout a story
- Create Social Stories to help with appropriate sequencing skills (breaking down a skill into steps)
- Use various adaptive devices for writing (slant board, pencil grip, large crayons, marker holder made out of plaster, cookie worksheet with magnetic numbers/letters, and PVC pen holder)
- Provide adaptive computer pieces (head pointer, large mouse, and software) when needed

Appendix F (continued)

Language & Literacy Development

LD 1. Children will develop skills in listening for the purpose of comprehension

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
LD 1 a	Listens to and follows spoken directions	• Follows directions such as, "Hang up your jacket and come to the group area." • Repeats an instruction to a friend	ELAKLSV1b Follows two-part oral directions
LD 1 b	Responds to questions	• Answers questions from familiar adults and peers • Responds to questions during causal conversation	
LD 1 c	Listens to recordings and shows understanding through body language or by interacting appropriately.	• Sings along with songs on tape • Turns pages of books	
LD 1 d	Listens to stories read aloud and shows understanding through body language or by interacting appropriately.	• Leans forward or smiles as books are read during group time • Repeats the rhyme in a repetitive book	ELAKR6a Listens to and reads a variety of literary and informational texts to gain knowledge and for pleasure
LD 1 e	Begins to distinguish fact from fiction in a read aloud text	• Tells whether story is real or make believe	ELAKR6d Begins to tell fact from fiction in a read aloud text
LD 1 f	Makes predictions from pictures and titles	• Predicts what happens next in a picture walk using picture clues or title of a book	ELAKR6b Makes predictions from pictures and titles
LD 1 g	Uses pictures or symbols to identify concepts	• Tells what comes next in a pictorial schedule	ELAKR6f Uses prior knowledge graphic features (illustrations), and graphic organizers to understand text
LD 1 h	Becomes increasingly familiar with the structure of stories (characters, events, plot, resolution of story)	• Retells the main events in a story • Discusses the characters in a story • Uses illustrations to predict printed text, such as saying, "Goldilocks is running away!"	ELAKR6c Asks and answers questions about essential narrative elements



"(When reading to children...) The more expressively we read, the more fantastic the experience will be. The more fantastic the experience, they more our kids will love books, and the more they'll "pretend" read. And the more the "pretend" read, the quicker they will learn to read. So reading aloud is not quite enough—we need to read aloud well."

Mem Fox
Reading Magic, 2001

Appendix F (continued)

Language & Literacy Development

LD 2. Children will learn to discriminate the sounds of language (phonological awareness)

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
LD 2 a	Differentiates sounds that are the same and different	• Recognizes that "Mark" and "Matt" begin with the same sound • Identifies common environmental sounds or animal sounds	
LD 2 b	Repeats rhymes, poems and finger plays	• Repeats rhymes such as "Humpty Dumpty" • Repeats finger plays and poems such as "Itsy Bitsy Spider"	ELAKR2a Identifies and produces rhyming words in response to an oral prompt and distinguishes rhyming and non-rhyming words See also ELAKLSV1c, ELAKLSV1d
LD 2 c	Recognizes the same beginning sounds in different words (alliteration)	• Plays with repetitive sounds such as snakes slither or the big blue ball bounces	ELAKR2b Identifies component sounds in spoken words
LD 2 d	Shows growing ability to hear and discriminate separate syllables in words	• Claps hands for syllables in names or other familiar words	ELAKR2c Blends and segments syllables in spoken words
LD 2 e	Creates and invents words by substituting one sound for another	• Sings the "Name Game" or "Willoughby Wallaby Woo" and substitutes different beginning sounds for names	ELAKR2a Identifies and produces rhyming words in response to an oral prompt and distinguishes rhyming and non-rhyming words

LD 3. Children will develop an understanding of new vocabulary introduced in conversations, activities, stories or books

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
LD 3 a	Increases vocabulary through everyday communication	• Participates in "Daily Message/Daily News" • Expresses ideas heard in stories	ELAKLSV1f Increases vocabulary to reflect a growing range of interests and knowledge
LD 3 b	Uses new vocabulary words correctly within the context of play or other classroom experiences	• After discussing community helpers, child says, "I want to be a veterinarian and take care of animals." • Creates a story for a wordless picture book.	ELAKR5a Listens to a variety of texts and uses new vocabulary in oral language
LD 3 c	Connects new vocabulary with prior educational experiences	• Helps create a language experience chart after participating in a field trip	ELAKLSV1g Communicates effectively when relating experiences and retelling stories heard

"Everyone has gifts, they just open them on different occasions."

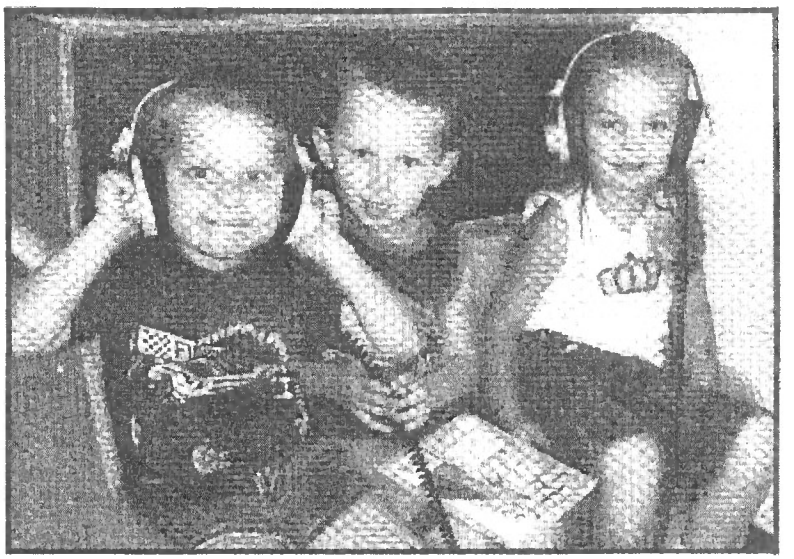
Author unknown

Appendix F (continued)

Language & Literacy Development

LD 4. Children will develop and expand expressive language skills (speaking)

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
LD 4 a	Uses language for a variety of purposes	• Uses language to express needs, feelings or preferences • Uses different voices for characters in a story	ELAKR5a Listens to a variety of texts and uses new vocabulary in oral language. See also: ELAKLSV1e
LD 4 b	Engages in conversations with adults and children	• Asks and answers questions for information and to solve problems • Tells personal narrative • Engages in turn-taking conversations	ELAKLSV1a Listens and speaks appropriately with peers and adults. See also: ELAKR5a
LD 4 c	Uses complete sentences of increasing length in conversation	• Uses descriptive words • Expands on ideas	ELAKLSV1h Uses complete sentences when speaking. See also: ELAKR5a.
LD 4 d	Uses language to pretend or create	• Pretends with words or actions • Tells real or make-believe stories	ELAKR6h Retells important facts in the student's own words. See also: ELAKR5a



"Behold the turtle. He only makes progress when he sticks his neck out."

James Bryant Conant

Appendix F (continued)

LD 5. Children will begin to develop age-appropriate strategies that will assist in reading

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
LD 5 a	Demonstrates an interest in books or stories	• Chooses to look at books independently • Requests that books be read	ELAKR1a Recognizes print and pictures can inform, entertain, and persuade
LD 5 b	Discusses books or stories read aloud	• Asks questions about a story or illustration • Adds personal information to a story	
LD 5 c	Exhibits book-handling skills	• Looks at books appropriately, left to right, top to bottom, turning one page at a time, front to back of book	ELAKR1c Tracks text read from left to right and top to bottom
LD 5 d	Associates symbols with objects, concepts and functions	• Recognizes familiar logos • Checks class job chart to find out whose job it is to wash the tables after snack • Uses labels in classroom to put away materials	ELAKR1a Recognizes print and pictures can inform, entertain, and persuade
LD 5 e	Recognizes that print represents spoken words	• Sees a word in the environment and asks the teacher about the word	ELAKR1b Demonstrates that print has meaning and represents spoken language in written form
LD 5 f	Dramatizes, tells and retells poems and stories	• Uses puppets or flannel board to retell a story • Tells a story to friends	ELAKR6e Retells familiar events and stories to include beginning, middle, and end
LD 5 g	Identifies some individual letters of the alphabet	• Identifies letters when using alphabet play dough cutters • Identifies letters in name or in the environment	ELAKR1d Distinguishes among written letters, words, and sentences
LD 5 h	Shares books and engages in pretend-reading with other children	• Shares a book with another child at the library center	ELAKR1b Demonstrates that print has meaning and represents spoken language in written form.
LD 5 i	Recognizes books as a source of information	• Asks the teacher to read a book about the classroom pet • Sees a fire truck outside and selects a book about fire trucks	ELAKR1a Recognizes print and pictures can inform, entertain, and persuade
LD 5 j	Connects information and events in books to real-life experiences	• When reading a book about a dog, talks about the pet at home	ELAKR6g Connects life experiences to read-aloud text
LD 5 k	Participates in oral reading activities	• Participates in oral reading activities (morning message, rebus story, experience story)	ELAKR4b Reads previously taught grade-level text with appropriate text
LD 5 l	Recognizes that sentences are composed of separate words	• Counts words in a sentence using a big book read aloud • Counts words in sentences during the morning message	ELAKR1e Recognizes that sentences in print are made up of separate words.
LD 5 m	Uses pictures or symbols to identify concepts	• Tells what comes next in a pictorial schedule.	ELAKR6f Uses prior knowledge, graphic features (illustrations), and graphic organizers to understand text.

Language and Literacy Development

Appendix F (continued)

Language & Literacy Development

LD 6 Children will begin to develop age-appropriate writing skills

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
LD 6 a	Experiments with a variety of writing tools, materials and surfaces	• Draws or writes using pencils, markers, crayons, paint, shaving cream • Draws or writes on paper, cardboard, chalkboard, dry-erase board	
LD 6 b	Uses scribbles, shapes, pictures and letters, or other forms of writing **Stages of writing:** • Pictures • Scribbles (squiggle lines and shapes) • Letter-like forms • Copies letters/words from the environment • Uses letters to represent sounds in words • Labels objects in drawings • Connects words to form sentences • Creates a story with beginning, middle, and end	• Uses scribble writing and letter-like forms • Draws pictures to represent ideas • Copies word cards from the writing center • Writes name or names of friends • Copies words from environment	ELAKW1b Uses drawings, letters, and phonetically spelled words to create meaning See also ELAKW1c
LD 6 c	Understands that print is used to communicate ideas and information (writing for a purpose)	• Writes list in the dramatic play area • Makes signs in the block center • Writes messages for friends or adults • Writes name on work to show ownership	ELAKR3a Demonstrates an understanding that there were systematic and predictable relationships between print and spoken sounds
LD 6 d	Begins to dictate words, phrases, and sentences to an adult recording on paper	• Tells an adult a story to record • Identifies objects in drawing/ painting for adult to record	ELAKW1a Writes or dictates to describe familiar persons, places, objects or experiences
LD 6 e	Uses left-to-right patterns	• Uses tracking when reading and writing the morning message and stories	ELAKW1d Uses left-to-right pattern of writing.

Teachers in Action

- Add vocabulary related to the current topic or interest to your writing area. Be sure to add pictures or symbols to help your non-readers
- Get to know your local librarian and ask him/her to help you select books related to your current topics
- Change your writing materials often to keep your children's interest
- Let children help you label materials in your classroom as you introduce them
- Invite celebrity readers to your classroom
- Use different voices as you read to represent different characters in the story
- Put words and symbols on chart stories, labels, etc.
- Use familiar rhymes for transitions
- Model appropriate writing daily. Be sure to use correct grammar
- Have children sign in daily. This can be saved for assessment to show growth and development in writing
- Create enough class-made books for each child to have one to take home at the end of the year
- Mini photo albums can become great storage for vocabulary cards
- Create portable writing centers in purses, tool boxes, suitcases, briefcases, and fishing tackle boxes, and place them around the room and for children to take outside
- Create a morning message daily

Appendix F (continued)

MATH

Mathematical instruction in Pre-K builds on the child's natural curiosity and desire to make order in the surrounding world. The instruction and the environment challenge children to explore ideas related to patterns, shapes, numbers, and space with increasing sophistication. Mathematical concepts develop as counting activities are built into the daily routine and activities are planned to reinforce the concept of one-to-one correspondence. Children develop an understanding of patterns and predictability as they participate in reading predictable books, see patterns in the environment, use classroom materials, and engage in patterning activities. As teachers use mathematical language, children are able to connect concepts of "more or less" with concrete objects. An understanding of size and measurement develops as children use non-standard or standard means to measure classroom materials. The experience of developing math concepts in Pre-K, using hands-on materials, lays the foundation for later abstract mathematical thinking.

Strategies to Support Inclusive Learning Environments

- Simplify a complicated task by breaking it into smaller parts or reducing the number of steps.
- Model instruction
- Use pictures/visual aides throughout daily activities.
- Ensure that students understand the meaning of key mathematical words (sorting, counting, adding, and total).
- Use real items to understand part and whole (real apple cut into pieces)
- Use modeling clay to form shapes instead of play dough with a child who has low muscle tone.
- Provide raised/textured objects for children with visual impairments.
- Adapt the length of the activity based on the needs of the child.

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Appendix F (continued)

MD 1 Children will begin to develop an understanding of numbers

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
MD 1 a	Counts by rote	• Counts in finger plays or rhymes • Sings a counting song	MKN1a Count a number of objects up to 30 SKCS2a
MD 1 b	Arranges sets of objects in one-to-one correspondence	• Matches blocks with animals • Places a spoon on each plate at the table	MKN1a Count a number of objects up to 30
MD 1 c	Counts objects using one-to-one correspondence	• Counts manipulatives • Counts the number of children present	MKN1a Count a number of objects up to 30
MD 1 d	Compares sets of objects using language	• Identifies "more than, less than or same" when comparing two groups • Explains that all of the long sticks are in one box and all the short sticks are in another box	MKN1e Compare two or more sets of objects (1-10) and identify which set is equal to, more than, or less than the other MKN2a Use counting strategies to find out how many items are in two sets when they are combined. MKN2b Build number combinations up to 10 and for doubles to 10 MKN2c Use objects, pictures, numbers, or words to create, solve, and explain story problems for two numbers that are each less than 10
MD 1 e	Begins to understand concept of part and whole using real objects	• Recognizes the difference between a whole apple and part of an apple	MKN1g Use informal strategies to share objects equally (divide) between two to three people or sets.
MD 1 f	Begins to identify ordinal numbers	• Lines objects on table and points to first in line and the last in line • Standing in line and says, "I am first, and you are second"	MKN1d Sequence and identify using ordinal numbers (1^{st} – 10^{th})
MD 1 g	Associates numeral name with set of objects	• Counts four objects and says, "I have four bears."	MKN1c Write numerals through 20 to label sets.
MD 1 h	Begins to understand the concept of currency as a means of exchange	• Sorts coins during a small group activity • Uses play money to purchase items from a prelend classroom store	SSKE3b MKN1h Identify coins by name and value (penny, nickel, dime, quarter) MKN1i Count out pennies to buy items that together cost less than 30 cents. MKN1j Make fair trades involving combinations of pennies and nickels or pennies and dimes.
MD 1 i	Begins to understand the concept of estimation	• Estimates the number of marbles in a jar • Estimates how many steps it will take to get to the playground • Estimates how many cups of water it will take to fill a pitcher	MKN1f Estimate quantities using five and ten as a benchmark SKCS2b
MD 1 j	Begins to recognize numbers	• Says, "I see the number 2," while pointing to the morning message board • Matches the correct number of counters to the number card and says, "Here is the number 4."	MKN1c Write numerals through 20 to label sets.

Mathematical Development

Appendix F (continued)

MD 2 Children will create and duplicate simple patterns

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
MD 2 a	Copies a pattern using sounds or physical movements	• Snaps, claps, stomps a rhythmic pattern	MKG3b Extend a given pattern and recognize similarities in different patterns.
MD 2 b	Recognizes and reproduces simple patterns of objects	• Creates patterns using manipulatives, blocks or other objects in the classroom	MKG3a Identify a missing shape with a given pattern of geometric shapes. MKG3b Extend a given pattern and recognize similarities in different patterns.
MD 2 c	Reproduces and extends a pattern using objects	• Sees the pattern in a string of beads and determines which bead is needed to continue the pattern	MKG3a Identify a missing shape with a given pattern of geometric shapes. MKG3b Extend a given pattern and recognize similarities in different patterns.
MD 2 d	Independently creates patterns using objects	• Creates patterns using manipulatives, blocks, or other objects in the classroom	MKG3b Extend a given pattern and recognize similarities in different patterns.
MD 2 e	Spontaneously recognizes and identifies patterns in the environment	• Recognizes patterns in rugs, clothes, daily schedule • Recognizes repeated phrases in stories	MKG3a Identify a missing shape with a given pattern of geometric shapes. MKG3b Extend a given pattern and recognize similarities in different patterns.

MD 3 Children will sort and classify objects

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
MD 3 a	Matches like objects	• Places all of the dinosaurs together	SKP1a, SKP1b
MD 3 b	Sorts objects using one characteristic	• Places all of the red blocks together and all of the green blocks together • Places the big animals in one group and small animals in another group • Sorts all of the pennies, nickels, and dimes into the appropriate groups.	SKP1a, SKP1b, SKP2a
MD 3 c	Classifies objects using more than one characteristic	• Makes a grouping of red triangles, green triangles, red squares, and green squares (sorted by color and shape)	SKP1a, SKP1b, SKL1b, SKL1c
MD 3 d	Sorts and classifies objects using self-selected criteria	• Sorts through a box of buttons and makes up rules for organization	SKP1a, SKP1b, SKL1b, SKL1c
MD 3 e	Explains sorting or classifying strategy	• Sorts items and says, "I put all of the big animals together."	SKL2a, SKL2b, SKL2d
MD 3 f	Participates in creating and using real and pictorial graphs or other simple representations of data	• Helps to create a graph of types of shoes worn in the classroom by placing shoes on a floor graph • Helps to creates a chart of favorite foods by placing name or symbol under the correct column	MKD1 Pose information questions, collect data, organize, and record results using objects, pictures, and picture graphs.

Mathematical Development

Appendix F (continued)

MD 4 Children will develop a sense of space and an understanding of basic geometric shapes

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
MD 4 a	Recognizes, describes and compares basic geometric shapes	• During group time says, "I am sitting on a square." • Notes that the classroom door is a rectangle • Using unit blocks, notices that a square has four sides and a triangle has three sides	MKG1a Recognize and name the following basic two-dimensional shapes: triangles, rectangles, squares, and circles MKG1e Compare geometric shapes and identify similarities and differences of the following two and three-dimensional shapes: triangles, rectangles, squares, circles, spheres, and cubes. SKCS5a
MD 4 b	Uses classroom materials to create shapes	• Combines unit blocks to make shapes • Forms shapes using play dough	MKG1c Observe concrete objects in the environment and represent the objects using basic shapes, such as drawing a representation of a house using a square together with a triangle for the roof. MKG1d Combine basic shapes into basic and more complicated shapes, and will decompose basic shapes into combinations of basic shapes. MKG1e Compare geometric shapes and identify similarities and differences of the following two and three-dimensional shapes: triangles, rectangles, squares, circles, spheres, and cubes.
MD 4 c	Uses language to indicate where things are in space: positions, directions, distances, order	• Uses positional words such as over, under, behind during play • Places an object inside and outside, behind and in front, under and above, beside and on a box on a table	MKG2a Identify when an object is beside another object, above another object, or below another object. MKG2b Identify when an object is in front of another object, behind another object, inside another object or outside it.

Mathematical Development

Appendix F (continued)

MD 5 Children will learn how to use a variety of non-standard and standard means of measurement

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
MD 5 a	Associates and describes the passage of time with actual events	• Notes that snack time is after outdoor time • Remarks that yesterday was special because of the trip to the library • Recalls daily schedule • Uses words to describe time intervals such as, yesterday, today, and tomorrow	MKM2a Know the names of the days of the week MKM2b Know the months of the year. MKM3a Order daily events MKM3b Tell the time when daily events occur, such as lunch, to the nearest hour MKM3c Know the name of the day of the week when weekly events occur in class SSKH3a, SSKH3b, SSKH3c, SSKH3d, SSKH3e, SSKH3f, SSKH3g, SKE1a
MD 5 b	Uses mathematical language to describe experiences involving measurement	• Uses comparison terms, such as, "My block is longer than yours" (heavy/light, big/little, tall/short)	MKM1a Compare and order objects on the basis of length MKM1b Compare and order objects on the basis of capacity. MKM1c Compare and order objects on the basis of height MKM1d Compare and order objects on the basis of weight.
MD 5 c	Measures the passage of time using non-standard or standard measures	• Uses the sand timer to measure time at the computer	SKE1a
MD 5 d	Measures the length of objects using non-standard or standard measures	• Uses links to measure the length of a table • Uses hands, feet, or string to measure length • Uses a ruler to measure the length of a block	MKM1a Compare and order objects on the basis of length. MKM1c Compare and order objects on the basis of height SKCS3a
MD 5 e	Measures the volume (capacity) of objects using non-standard or standard measures	• Uses a cup or plastic container to measure the water in the sensory table • Uses measuring cups to measure ingredients for a recipe	MKM1b Compare and order objects on the basis of capacity
MD 5 f	Measures and compares the weight of objects using non-standard or standard measures	• Holds a block in each hand and identifies which is heaviest • Uses balance scale to compare weight of small blocks and plastic cubes	MKM1d Compare and order objects on the basis of weight. SKCS4b, SKCS4c, SKCS6b
MD 5 g	Orders two or more objects by size (seriation)	• Uses blocks of three different sizes and places in order of size-small, medium, large • Arranges four rods from shortest to longest	SKCS4c

Mathematical Development

Appendix F (continued)

SCIENCE

Pre-K children are naturally curious about their world. Pre-K science activities encourage the student to explore, investigate, observe and record changes in the environment. Children learn to use their senses and simple tools such as magnets and magnifiers to make observations and collect information. Activities such as noting the changes in the seasons, caring for animals and classroom pets, and exploring simple machines encourage the further development of scientific thinking.

Strategies to Support an Inclusive Learning Environment

- Use a type of graphic organizer (story board, flow chart) to determine knowledge of sequence of events and prediction of what will come next.
- Use visual aides when talking about weather and environment.
- Encourage hands-on and sensory experiences such as touching, holding, exploring, tasting, smelling, and manipulating objects.
- Provide physical guidance/hand over hand support when using science tools.

Appendix F (continued)

SD 1 Children will use processes of science to actively explore and increase understanding of the environment

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
SD 1 a	Asks questions about objects, organisms, or events in environment	• Notes the different ways that insects can move • Inspects a bird's nest and wonders how it was constructed • Sees a rainbow and asks how it was formed	SKCS1
SD 1 b	Uses senses to observe, classify, and learn about objects	• Identifies scent containers by sense of smell • Identifies objects in a "feely" bag by touch • Separates objects by texture	SKCS1a SKE2a SKE2b SKP1a
SD 1 c	Uses language to describe observation	• Notes that the hamster is small, furry, and soft • Notes that the turtle moves slowly, and the hamster moves quickly	SKCS5a SKL2a SKL2b
SD 1 d	Uses simple equipment to experiment, observe, and increase understanding	• Uses magnet wands to identify magnetic items in science center • Looks through prism and says, "I can see a rainbow."	SKCS3a SKCS6b
SD 1 e	Records observations through dictating to an adult, drawing pictures, or using other forms of writing	• Draws pictures documenting result of an experiment using magnets • Keeps a pictorial log of plant growth	SKCS5b
SD 1 f	Predicts what will happen next based on previous experience	• After planting a seed, says "We planted seeds at our house and grew flowers."	SKCS1

SD 2 Children will acquire scientific knowledge related to life science

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
SD 2 a	Observes, explores, and describes a wide variety of animals and plants	• Uses picture cards and matches animals and their offspring • Describes the different types of leaves on the trees on the playground • Sorts animals according to skin coverings (feathers, fur, and scales)	SKI 1b SKL1c SKL2d
SD 2 b	Recognizes there are basic requirements for all common life forms	• Takes care of familiar plants and animals in the classroom	SD 2b SKL1a SKCS6c
SD 2 c	Observes, explores, and describes a variety of non-living objects	• Makes collections of non-living objects such as rocks, sea shells, buttons	SKE2c SKL1a
SD 2 d	Understands that plants and animals have varying life cycles	• Observes life cycle of insects or amphibians • Reads books about life cycles such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*	
SD 2 e	Participates in activities related to preserving the environment	• Places scrap paper in the classroom recycling bin • Assists in planting a tree	

Scientific Development

Appendix F (continued)

SD 3 Children will acquire scientific knowledge related to physical science

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
SD 3 a	Investigates and describes the states of matter	• Observes ice melting • Describes the difference between liquid and solid objects	SKCS4b
SD 3 b	Describes objects by their physical properties	• Describes the difference between the wet sand and the dry sand • Describes how water flows through a tube in the sensory table	SKE2a SKE 2b SKP1a SKCS4b
SD 3 c	Explores simple machines	• Creates a ramp for cars in the block center	SKP2b
SD 3 d	Investigates different types/speeds of motion	• Plays follow the leader with different types of motion • Rolls objects on various ramps in the block center • Comments, "My car goes faster than Johnny's truck."	SKCS4b

SD 4 Children will acquire scientific knowledge related to earth science

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
SD 4 a	Investigates, compares, and contrasts seasonal changes in the immediate environment	• Notes that it is necessary to wear jackets in the winter, because it is cold outside • Draws a picture of the weather outside	
SD 4 b	Discovers through observations that weather can change from day to day	• Graphs daily weather • Reads outside thermometer and records observations in a weather journal	
SD 4 c	Participates in activities to explore the earth (rocks, soil, air) and sky (clouds, sun, moon, stars)	• Listens to stories about the earth and sky such as *Good Night Moon, In the Tall Tall Grass, It Looked Like Spilt Milk* • Observes and draws pictures of clouds • Observes and draws pictures of shadows at varying times of the day • Collects rocks and classifies by size, color, shape, texture • Classify objects according to those seen in the day sky and those seen in the night sky	SKE1b SKE1c SKE2a SKE2b SKE2c SKP3 b

Teachers in Action

- Use cooking activities often to help with science concepts
- Change your materials in your sensory table often. The materials can relate to your current topic
- Use real and found materials to help children identify magnetic properties
- Let children help care for class pets and plants
- Science is best explained through reading materials with real pictures
- Grow seeds and let children record the changes and growth

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Scientific Development

Appendix F (continued)

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies in Pre-K is the development of meaningful knowledge about the people, jobs, landmarks, and cultures of the surrounding community. Children also learn how to contribute to the successful functioning of the classroom. They become aware of the similarities and differences among people and how each person is an important member of the community. As children learn about responsibility in the classroom community, they begin building skills needed for participating in a democracy.

Strategies to Support an Inclusive Learning Environment

- Use picture schedules to identify classroom jobs (picture of child next to the job they are responsible for)
- Use books, dolls, and puppets that depict children of varying ability levels
- Incorporate people with disabilities in all areas to represent awareness of differences at home, school, and in the community

Appendix F (continued)

SS 1 Children will develop an appreciation of his/her role as a member of the family, the classroom, and the community

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
SS 1 a	Begins to understand family structures and roles	• Identifies different family structures • Looks at photographs of classmates' families • Reads stories about different family structures • Participates in dramatic play in "home" setting, using dress-up clothes	SSKE1 SSKE2
SS 1 b	Participates in classroom jobs and contributes to the classroom community	• Feeds fish, picks up paper off the floor, passes out napkins during snack, helps during clean-up time • Describes and identifies necessary classroom jobs (ex: cleaning tables, feeding class pets)	SSKE1 SSKE2
SS 1 c	Becomes aware of the roles, responsibilities and services provided by community workers	• Pretends to be a store salesperson or mail carrier (or other community worker) during dramatic play • Identifies community workers by the uniform worn or the equipment used • Completes the community worker puzzle and describes the various jobs	SSKCG2 SSKE1
SS 1 d	Becomes aware of family and community celebrations and events	• Describes family celebrations (birthdays, family gatherings, holidays) • Participates in community events (parades, festivals, fairs, picnics)	SSKH1 SSKG1

SS 2 Children will develop a respect for differences in people

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
SS 2 a	Identifies similarities and differences among people	• Recognizes that classmates have hair, but it can be different colors, lengths, and textures • Uses multicultural dolls/books/ materials. Materials should represent differing ethnicity, culture, ages, ability, and gender.	SSIP 1
SS 2 b	Demonstrates an emerging awareness and respect for culture and ethnicity	• Learns some words of other languages • Tastes a snack that a classmate from another culture brings to school	SSKG1
SS 2 c	Demonstrates emerging awareness and respect for abilities	• Reads a story about a child with a disability • Includes children with disabilities in play/conversation	SSIP 1 SSKCG2

Appendix F (continued)

SS 3 Children will express beginning geographic thinking

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
SS 3 a	Identifies common features in the home and school environment	• Describes what is seen on the way to school • After touring the school, draws a picture about what was seen	SSKG2 SSKG3
SS 3 b	Creates simple representations of home, school, or community	• Builds a familiar street with blocks • Draws a simple map of classroom or school • Drives toy cards on roads made from blocks or uses blue paper to represent water	SSKG2 SSKG3 SSMG1
SS 3 c	Uses and responds to words to indicate directionality, position, and size	• Identifies objects that are near and far • Talks about the largest (smallest) building in the city • Identifies buildings that are close to or far from the school.	SSMG1
SS 3 d	Develops awareness of the community, city, and state in which he/she lives	• Takes a walking field trip to explore the local community • Identifies the name of the city and state in which he/she lives • Becomes familiar with community and state landmarks (city hall, police stations, grocery store, museums, capital).	SSKH2 SSKG2 SSKG3
SS 3 e	Recognizes characteristics of other geographic regions and cultures	• Explores the characteristics of arctic animals • Reads a story about life in the rain forest	SSKG2 SSKG1

Teachers in Action

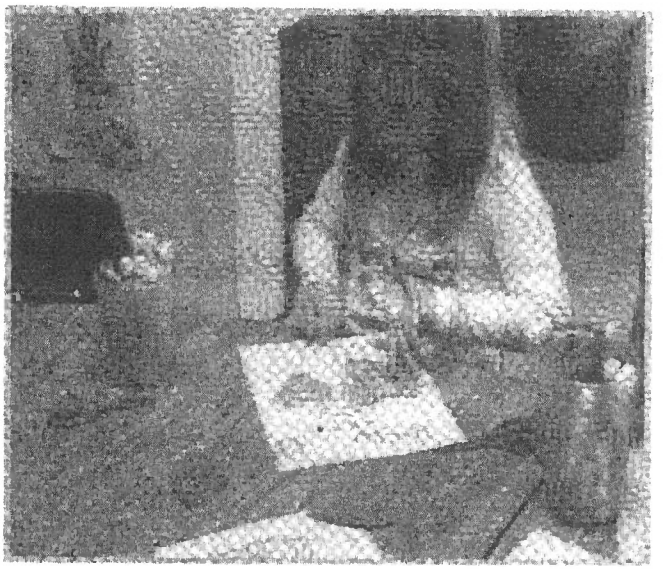
- Invite parents to talk about different family cultures and traditions. Ask them to cook an authentic dish to share with the class
- Invite community workers to your classroom
- Add a globe and maps to your classroom to talk about different locations
- Explore your community on a walking field trip
- Add community helper clothing to your center areas
- Help children identify what city and town they live in
- Discuss various celebrations around the world
- Add real pictures of different regions of the world
- Collect postcards and travel brochures from different places families have visited
- Do a "Flat Stanley" project
- Use books and literature to lead discussions on differences between themselves and others

Social Studies Development

Appendix F (continued)

CREATIVE

The creative arts, including art, music, and drama, provide opportunities for the application of individual ideas, feelings and expression. Creative expression connects to later reading success by fostering eye-hand coordination and the concept of symbolic representation. By experimenting with sounds, colors, forms, motion and words, children communicate in ways that are distinctly their own and that reflect their learning style. Children also learn to appreciate the contributions of other children and adults in the world of the arts.



Strategies to Support an Inclusive Learning Environment

- Utilize adaptive equipment when necessary (adaptive scissors, large crayons, and various sized paint containers)
- Use pictures/story board to prompt/facilitate communication regarding painting or drawing
- Use visual cues (smiling, clapping) with child to show appreciation for others work
- Use various types of assistive technology as appropriate with music and movement activities
- Simplify directions as needed
- Use a tape recorder

Appendix F (continued)

CD 1 Children will explore and use a variety of materials to develop artistic expression

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
CD 1 a	Experiments with a variety of materials and activities for sensory experience and exploration	• Uses markers, paint, crayons, modeling clay, collage materials, play dough	Kindergarten GPS Standards are not yet available for this domain.
CD 1 b	Uses materials to create original work and for self-expression	• Uses collage materials to create a picture • Creates a sculpture using clay	
CD 1 c	Shares details about personal creations (paintings, drawings, 3-D sculptures, block structures)	• Explains painting or drawing to another person • Creates an airplane with materials and tells teacher how each part makes it work	
CD 1 d	Expresses interest in and shows appreciation for the creative work of others	• Watches classmates perform a puppet show or a dance they have created • Comments with enthusiasm on the construction, artwork, or writing that classmates have created • Shows interest in illustrations in books or pieces of art work in the environment	

CD 2 Children will participate in music and movement activities

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
CD 2 a	Uses music and movement to express thoughts, feelings, and energy	• Uses props to respond with expression to music of various tempos • Interprets emotions through music • Develops movements that express concepts (feelings, directions, words, ideas)	Kindergarten GPS Standards are not yet available for this domain
CD 2 b	Participates in group singing or other musical activities	• Sings a song with the group during circle time • Plays the classroom musical instruments	
CD 2 c	Participates in creative movement and dance	• Creates a movement that responds to the beat of a record • Exhibits a variety of ways to move (forward, backward, sideways) • Shows creativity in movement (marching, hopping, jumping, snapping, twisting, dancing, swaying, stomping, turning)	
CD 2 d	Explores various music types, musical instruments, and music from various cultures.	• Uses headphones to listen to classical music • Uses maracas as a musical prop during music and movement • Uses materials to create a musical instrument	

Appendix F (continued)

CD 3 Children will use drama to express individuality

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
CD 3 a	Participates in dramatic play to express feelings, dramatize stories, reenact real-life roles and experiences	• Puts on the fireman's hat and pretends to put out a fire • Uses a note pad to take a restaurant order in the home living area • Pretends to be a waiter and serves food to friends sitting at the pretend restaurant table	Kindergarten GPS Standards are not yet available for this domain.
CD 3 b	Recreates a story or poem through drama	• Uses props to retell the story of *The Three Little Pigs* • Pretends to be "Jack Be Nimble" and jumps over a block representing a candlestick	
CD 3 c	Participates in activities using symbolic materials and gestures to represent real objects and situations	• Uses a block to represent a telephone • Claps hands to represent thunder • Uses a scarf to symbolize the wind blowing	

Teachers in Action

- Add real and found materials as collage items
- Change painting materials and media often to keep children's interest
- Use real and found materials for 3-D structures
- Take art activities outdoors
- Create large group murals
- Use real and found materials for music props
- Let children create their own musical instruments for a "marching band"
- Encourage children to make props to retell stories
- Act out traditional stories
- Use puppets and language props to retell stories
- Let children make their own puppets
- Change dramatic play props often to keep children's interest
- Ask parents to donate items or let you borrow items to go along with a current topic or interest

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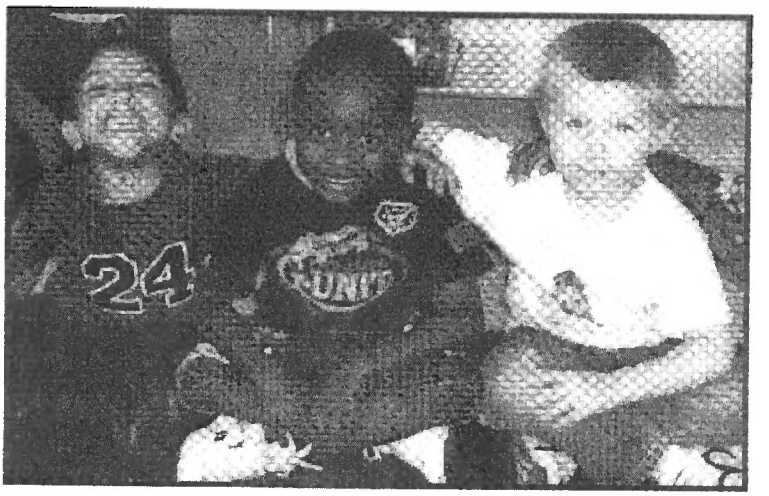
Creative Development

Appendix F (continued)

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL

In Pre-K, children develop social and emotional skills that allow them to successfully participate in society. A key to social and emotional development is building secure and positive relationships in a supportive environment. Interpersonal and social skills for communicating with others and learning how to express emotions in socially acceptable ways are taught through direct and indirect instruction. Attention is also given to helping children develop positive attitudes to learning such as initiative, curiosity, and persistence in performing tasks.



Strategies to Support an Inclusive Learning Environment

- Provide choices so all children have more control over their environment (show two pictures and have child pick, use communication aides for child with limited speech)
- Use photographs and mirrors to recognize uniqueness of self and others.
- Facilitate/model communication between children to promote appropriate relationships
- Classroom rules and expectations need to be available in many different forms (pictures, words, and Braille) so all children can understand them.
- Use various methods (timer, clock, verbal, or picture schedule) to prepare children for transition time
- Allow children to carry an item (meaningful symbol or toy) during transition from one activity to another
- To reduce frustration, which may lead to behavior problems, divide skills into smaller steps

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Appendix F (continued)

Social & Emotional Development

SE 1 Children will develop confidence and positive self-awareness

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
SE 1 a	Demonstrates knowledge of personal information	• Describes self using several basic characteristics (gender, name, age) • Says name when asked or sings name in a song	Kindergarten GPS Standards are not yet available for this domain.
SE 1 b	Recognizes self as a unique individual and becomes aware of the uniqueness of others	• States, "I have brown eyes, Mary has blue eyes." • Says, "My hair is short, and my friend has long hair."	
SE 1 c	Demonstrates confidence in his/her range of abilities and expresses pride in accomplishments	• Says, "Watch me. I can do it by myself."	
SE 1 d	Develops personal preferences	• Makes choices during independent activities • Chooses a favorite color, food, song, etc.	

SE 2 Children will develop curiosity, initiative, self-direction and persistence

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
SE 2 a	Shows interest in learning new concepts and trying new experiences	• Investigates and experiments with materials • Asks questions about the people in the classroom environment	Kindergarten GPS Standards are not yet available for this domain.
SE 2 b	Initiates interaction with others	• Introduces himself to a new classmate • Invites other children to join play	
SE 2 c	Demonstrates self-direction in use of materials	• Chooses learning activities • Chooses to use the writing center to make a card for a friend • Becomes involved with classroom materials without teacher prompting	
SE 2 d	Develops independence during activities, routines, play	• Selects additional materials to complete a project • Hangs up book bag/jacket upon arrival to school	
SE 2 e	Sustains attention to a task or activity appropriate for age	• Builds an extensive block structure • Completes a challenging puzzle	

Teachers In Action

- Provide opportunities for children to make choices throughout the day
- Model vocabulary for expressing feelings through language
- Listen to children's explanations and support their efforts towards solving problems with peers
- Have class meetings to discuss events and issues, solve problems, and share celebrations and news
- Set up small group activities to allow for child choice and free exploration of materials
- Model appropriate interactions for inviting others into a group activity

Appendix F (continued)

Social & Emotional Development

SE 3 Children will increase the capacity for self-control

	Performance Indicators	Examples	K GPS
SE 3 a	Helps to establish classroom rules and routines	• Provides ideas to make the classroom run smoothly • Discusses rules for being safe outdoors	Kindergarten GPS Standards are not yet available for this domain.
SE 3 b	Follows rules and routines within the learning environment	• Remembers to follow simple rules such as walking in the hallways • Participates in simple non-competitive games	
SE 3 c	Uses classroom materials purposefully and respectfully	• Uses materials and equipment without breaking or destroying the items • Puts materials back into the assigned spaces	
SE 3 d	Manages transitions and adapts to changes in routine	• Moves smoothly from one routine to another • Understands and follows daily schedule	
SE 3 e	Expresses feelings through appropriate gestures, actions and language	• Identifies common emotions such as: • "I am happy." or "That made me sad." • Uses words to express frustration rather than hitting another child	

SE 4 Children will develop interpersonal and social skills for relating with other members of the learning community

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
SE 4 a	Interacts appropriately with peers and familiar adults	• Follows suggestions given by a friend concerning their play • Greets the teacher or other adults when arriving at school	Kindergarten GPS Standards are not yet available for this domain.
SE 4 b	Begins to recognize the needs and rights of others	• Gives assistance to peers who are trying to solve a problem such as zipping coats or tying shoes • Responds appropriately to a friend when he/she says, "No" • Respects personal space and belongings of others	
SE 4 c	Shows empathy and understanding to others	• Is concerned and wants to help when a classmate falls • Helps a classmate pick up spilled toys • Carries something for a child who is unable to do so	
SE 4 d	Participates successfully as a member of a group	• Cooperates with other children during dramatic play or in building block structures • Works with other children to complete a project • Develops friendships with peers	
SE 4 e	Participates in resolving conflicts and disagreements with others	• Settles a dispute with another child through negotiation • Takes turns without pushing or other conflict • Seeks help from a teacher when needed	

Appendix F (continued)

HEALTH & PHYSICAL

Health and physical development impact a child's ability to learn in all curriculum areas. Young children begin to establish life-long eating habits that can help prevent disease, obesity, and other health problems. Children need to understand sound health practices, nutritional choices, and safety measures to optimize the capacity for learning. Physical development is an essential part of the instructional program and activities should be structured to encourage children to explore the world, promote agility and strength, and to develop balance and coordination. Materials and activities for fine motor muscles develop the muscles that are needed for later academic tasks.

Strategies to Support an Inclusive Learning Environment

- Define boundaries to promote body and spatial awareness
- Assign a peer who can model the desired actions and assist with activities
- Provide physical guidance/support for children having difficulty with motor tasks
- Provide adaptive puzzles, switches, and toys to foster fine motor development
- Utilize storyboards to explain self-help skills

Appendix F (continued)

Health & Physical Development

HPD 1 Children will participate in a variety of gross-motor activities to develop control, balance, strength and coordination

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
HPD 1 a	Develops coordination and balance	• Carries a glass of water across the room without spilling it • Peddles and steers a tricycle • Walks on balance beam • Balances on one foot	Kindergarten GPS Standards are not yet available for this domain.
HPD 1 b	Coordinates movements to perform tasks	• Walks, gallops, jumps and runs in rhythm to simple tunes and music patterns • Climbs a slide ladder using arms and feet • Moves body into position to catch or kick a ball • Builds strength and stamina in movement activities	
HPD 1 c	Participates in a variety of indoor and outdoor activities that increase strength, endurance, and flexibility.	• Uses outdoor large motor equipment daily	

HPD 2 Children will participate in activities that foster fine motor development

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
HPD 2 a	Performs fine-motor tasks that require small-muscle strength and control	• Tears a piece of tape off a roll of tape • Uses paper punch or stapler • Works with play dough • Uses writing tools	Kindergarten GPS Standards are not yet available for this domain.
HPD 2 b	Uses eye-hand coordination to perform fine-motor tasks	• Puts together puzzles • Strings beads or puts pegs into boards	
HPD 2 c	Exhibits manual coordination	• Uses scissors and art materials • Uses hands and fingers to act out finger plays and songs • Begins to practice self-help skills in zipping and buttoning	

HPD 3 Children understand healthy and safe living practices

	Performance Indicators	Learning in Action	K GPS
HPD 3 a	Participates in activities related to health and personal care routine.	• Washes hands after toileting/before eating • Dramatizes health care professional roles • Uses the tooth model to demonstrate how to properly brush teeth	Kindergarten GPS Standards are not yet available for this domain.
HPD 3 b	Participates in activities related to nutrition	• Identifies healthy foods • Sorts the plastic food in the dramatic play area into groups of fruits and vegetables	
HPD 3 c	Discusses and utilizes appropriate safety procedures	• Knows to call 911 in an emergency • Discusses safety rules for playground • Participates in activities to learn to avoid dangerous situations	

APPENDIX G

Georgia Pre-K Progress Report

BRIGHT START from the START
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Georgia Pre-K Progress Report
School Year _____ - _____

Student _____		**Teacher** _____	
Parent/Guardian _____		**School** _____	
Birth Date _____	**Age September 1:**	**Years** **Months**	
Immunizations	☐ Up-to-Date	☐ Waiver Approved	
Eye Examination	☐ Completed/No Follow Up	☐ Follow Up Needed	☐ Follow Up Completed
Ear Examination	☐ Completed/No Follow Up	☐ Follow Up Needed	☐ Follow Up Completed
Dental Examination	☐ Completed/No Follow Up	☐ Follow Up Needed	☐ Follow Up Completed
Other Health Related Issues			
Fall:	☐ Appropriate Referrals Made	_____ Date	☐ No Referrals Needed
Spring:	☐ Appropriate Referrals Made	_____ Date	☐ No Referrals Needed

Days Absent: ___ Fall ___ Spring	**Days Tardy:** ___ Fall ___ Spring	**Early Checkout:** ___ Fall ___ Spring

COMMENTS: Give reasons for "Needs Development" and/or note special strengths and talents in each domain.

Social and Emotional (Personal and Social)	
Fall: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:
Spring: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:
Language and Literacy	
Fall: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:
Spring: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:
Mathematics (Mathematical Thinking)	
Fall: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:
Spring: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:

Appendix G (continued)

Student _____	School Year _____ -
Science (Scientific Thinking)	
Fall: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:
Spring: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:
Social Studies	
Fall: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:
Spring: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:
Creative Expression (The Arts)	
Fall: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:
Spring: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:
Physical Development (Physical Development and Health)	
Fall: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:
Spring: ☐ As Expected ☐ Needs Development	Comments:

Parent/Guardian Conferences: **Two (2) Conferences Required – Fall and Spring**

Date _____ **Parent/Guardian Signature** _____
Comments: _____
_____
_____

Date _____ **Parent/Guardian Signature** _____
Comments: _____
_____
_____

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